

# Public Document Pack



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 14 MARCH 2023

A BLENDED MEETING of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS, TD6 0SA AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS on TUESDAY, 14 MARCH 2023 at 10.00 am.

**All Attendees, including members of the public, should note that the public business in this meeting will be livestreamed and video recorded and that recording will be available thereafter for public view for 180 days.**

J. J. WILKINSON,  
Clerk to the Council,

3 March 2023

<b>BUSINESS</b>		
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
2.	<b>Order of Business</b>	
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
4.	<b>Minute</b> (Pages 3 - 8)  Consider Minute of Meeting held on 14 February 2023 for approval and signing by the Chairman. (Copy attached.)	2 mins
5.	<b>Final Revenue Virements and Earmarked Balances 2022/23</b> (Pages 9 - 20)  Consider report by Acting Chief Financial Officer. (Copy attached.)	10 mins
6.	<b>Corporate Procurement Strategy 2023/24</b> (Pages 21 - 52)  Consider report by Acting Chief Financial Officer. (Copy attached.)	10 mins
7.	<b>Scottish Borders Council's Annual Complaints Performance Report: 2021/22</b> (Pages 53 - 80)  Consider report by Director - Resilient Communities. (Copy attached.)	10 mins
8.	<b>Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 3 2022/23 Performance Information</b> (Pages 81 - 110)	15 mins

	Consider report by Director – People, Performance and Change. (Copy attached.)	
9.	<b>Community Recycling Centre - Booking System</b> (Pages 111 - 142) Consider report by Director of Infrastructure & Environment. (Copy attached.)	10 mins
10.	<b>Any Other Items Previously Circulated</b>	
11.	<b>Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent</b>	

## NOTES

1. **Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
2. **Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

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**Membership of Committee:-** Councillors E. Jardine (Chair), C. Cochrane, L. Douglas, M. Douglas, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, J. Linehan, S. Mountford, D. Parker, J. Pirone, E. Robson, M. Rowley, F. Sinclair, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol and T. Weatherston

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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA and via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 14th February, 2023 at 10.00 am

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Present:- Councillors E. Jardine (Chair), , L. Douglas, M. Douglas, J. Greenwell, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, J. Linehan, S. Mountford, D. Parker J. Pirone, E. Robson, M. Rowley, F. Sinclair, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol, and T. Weatherston.

Also Present: Councillor W. McAteer

Apologies: Councillors C. Cochrane

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Acting Chief Financial Officer, Chief Planning Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 6 December 2022.

**DECISION**

**APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.**

2. **EMPTY HOMES GRANT SCHEME PROGRESS UPDATE**

2.1 With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting held on 7 December 2021, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director, Infrastructure and Environment which provided an update on the delivery of the Empty Homes Grant Scheme since its implementation in December 2021. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a statutory requirement on Local Authorities to develop a Local Housing Strategy (LHS). That strategy set out the strategic direction for housing investment and service delivery, and identified the need to bring empty properties back into effective use. The report explained that the most common hurdle for empty home owners was the financial cost associated with bringing a property back into use. The Committee approved the creation of a specific fund to assist owners to bring homes back in to use either for occupation or let out as affordable homes in December 2021. The introduction of the Empty Homes Grant contributed to the strategic objectives highlighted in the LHS, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and the Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan. Additionally, tackling empty properties supported the approach to town centre and place based regeneration. The report provided an update on progress made and information on applications for financial support made by empty home owners.

2.2 The Lead Officer, Housing Strategy and Development, Ms Donna Bogdanovic, presented the report, and highlighted that considerable work had taken place to develop and establish the appropriate legal, financial, and monitoring processes to allow the scheme to operate. The report provided an overview of the applications which had been received, and their current status. Since the report had been published a further application had been received, and 2 of the applications listed as not yet approved had been approved. Ms Bogdanovic expected that all of the applications identified on the list would be approved following the provision of more detail, acquisition of building warrants or approval of planning permission. 12 out of the 16 applications would result in a home available to rent at local housing rates, the remaining 4 would be used by an owner occupier. Over half of the applications related to properties which had been vacant for 15 years or more. Of the resources set aside for the Scheme, over 80% had been earmarked. Members highlighted that bringing empty homes back into use represented a

significant positive benefit for the region. In response to a question regarding the number of applications received, Ms Bogdanovic expressed satisfaction at the volume of applications, and expressed her thanks to Scottish Borders Council's finance and legal departments for their assistance. Regarding the challenges facing the scheme, the Empty Homes Officer outlined that each project presented its own unique challenges, as some elements of projects would not be eligible for funding, whilst others could. In response to a question regarding the use of the premium rate of council tax, the Empty Homes Officer confirmed that all of the empty homes which were on the valuation roll would have been subject to the premium rate. The Empty Homes Officer undertook to discuss with Members how they could check whether a home was on the valuation roll for council tax purposes. It was confirmed that the scheme could be used in instances where a change of use was proposed, however the necessary planning permissions were required, and other qualifying conditions needed to be satisfied. In response to a question regarding the timescales involved, particularly with reference to the recommendations included in the report, Ms Bogdanovic confirmed that the original intention of the scheme had been to work through a full cycle to March 2024. However, given the speed of progress, and resource allocation, since the Scheme was approved, it was expected that an evaluation would be undertaken and a report prepared for December 2023. Regarding the possibility that owners of homes whom were in receipt of a grant from the scheme could seek to rent out their properties at a higher rate following the expiration of the 5 year restrictive period, Ms Bogdanovic confirmed that there were no grounds on which that could be stopped, however policy discussions were ongoing at a national level regarding rent caps, and other protections existed which limited the amount by which rent could be increased. Ms Bogdanovic confirmed that discussions had taken place regarding the appropriateness of providing financial support to owner occupiers, and explained that in such instances a grant could only cover up to 50% of the total cost of works, compared to 75% where a property would be let out. In response to a question regarding how many individual applicants were involved in the scheme, the Empty Homes Officer confirmed that the 5 applications in Galashiels were from the same individual, and 3 applications in Eyemouth related to one individual property owner. Ms Bogdanovic explained that each property had been treated as an individual application, and that the presentation of that would be examined for future reporting purposes.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) note the progress made in the delivery of the Empty Homes Grant Scheme; and**
- (b) note that should the grant assistance prove successful, Officers would bring back proposals recommending an ongoing financial annual allocation from the revenues raised from the second homes council tax to continue to support the initiative.**

## **3. MONITORING OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23**

- 3.1** There had been circulated copies of a report by the Acting Chief Financial Officer which provided budgetary control statements for the Council's General Fund based on actual expenditure and income to 31 December 2022 along with explanations of the major variances identified between projected outturn expenditure/ income and the approved budget. The report explained that the Council continued to be impacted by the current operating environment. Those impacts included continuing effects of the Covid-19 recovery period and unprecedented inflation levels in the wider economy, which had caused internal Council pressures and pressures on critical service delivery partners. Due to the very challenging operating environment it remained essential that the Council continued to operate as efficiently as possible to ensure that any financial implications not yet clear could be managed as the financial year progressed. Forecasts had been completed at the third quarter of 2022/23, as at 31 December, which projected the Council to be in a balanced position at the financial year end. That forecasted position included

the deployment of £1.528m of the Recovery Fund in order to balance the 2022/23 budget, which resulted in a balance of £1.844m which remained to address future pressures.

- 3.2 The Recovery Fund would be drawn down as required to meet identified financial pressures. Confirmed funding was in place for 2022/23 and was categorised as follows: funding provided by Scottish Government, £0.156m; funding carried forward from 2021/22 through Covid-19 reserve, £9.465m; funding included in the 2022/23 Financial Plan for Covid-19 response, £0.069m; and Assumed Local Mobilisation Plan (LMP) funding, £1.987m. Recovery funding was split between funding which had been ring-fenced to be used for a specific purpose (£3.595m), for example education recovery, LMP and admin funding, and that which could be used more generally by the Council to address Covid-19 pressures (£8.082m). All residual Covid-19 funding carried forward from 2021/22 and full details of funding available was shown in Appendix 2 to the report. Financial plan savings of £12.027m were required to be delivered in 2022/23. An analysis of deliverability was shown in Appendix 3 to the report. Following the December month end £8.276m savings had been delivered permanently, £0.504m were profiled to be delivered by 31 March 2023 and £3.247m had been delivered on a temporary basis through alternative savings. The Acting Chief Financial Officer, Ms Suzanne Douglas, presented the report and responded to Members questions. Regarding increased spending on Children's Panel; Appeal and Reporters expenses; Local Election costs; and Councillor travel, Ms Douglas confirmed that those items had been budgeted for but had incurred more costs than had initially been expected. It was highlighted that Elected Members could use Council e-vehicles to attend community council meetings to cut travel costs. In response to a question regarding £700k of pressures related to sickness and maternity pay within Education and Lifelong Learning, Ms Douglas confirmed that there was a budget set aside, however the pressures related to spend above what had been anticipated in the budget. The effects of Covid-19 and other long-term sickness continued to impact upon staff, however the issue was being monitored closely. Regarding the increased spend of £39k on pay awards and increased client specific care package within Joint Learning Disability, Ms Douglas confirmed that the figures represented the overall net position. In response to a question regarding further increases to the budget for Learning Disability services, and whether savings were still planned for the service, Ms Douglas explained that management were still focused on delivering savings where possible, and highlighted that changes to care package provision had delivered £40k of savings on a permanent basis, with £160k delivered on a temporary basis. The Chief Executive explained that considerable resources were required within the Children's and Young People Service for specialist care packages. Members highlighted that the packages could often be highly complex, and that the Council had a duty to provide them. In relation to undeliverable savings being offset by unallocated additional government funding on a temporary basis, Ms Douglas explained that this related to funding which was provided to Scottish Borders Council (SBC) as part of the settlement from Scottish Government which was required to be spent on services delegated to the Integrated Joint Board by SBC. The additional funding allocated recognised that there was a saving to be made by Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships which would not be possible in 2022/23, and that the in house spend by SBC on what was delegated to the IJB would be higher than expected. Members unanimously agreed to approve the recommendations.

## **DECISION**

### **AGREED to:-**

- (a) note the projected corporate monitoring position reported at 31 December 2022, the remaining pressures identified, the underlying cost drivers of that position and the identified areas of financial risk as reflected in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) note the pressures of £1.528m as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report being funded from the Recovery Fund in 2022/23 in order to balance the budget;**

- (c) **note the Recovery Fund resources detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;**
- (d) **note the progress made in achieving Financial Plan savings in Appendix 3 the report; and**
- (e) **approve the virements attached as Appendices 4 and 5 to the report.**

**4. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2022/23**

4.1 There had been circulated copies of a report by the Acting Chief Financial Officer which provided an update on the progress of the 2022/23 Capital Financial Plan and sought approval for virements and the reallocation of funds. The monitoring tables in Appendix 1 to the report reported on actual expenditure to 31 December 2022. Key issues and highlights identified in those tables were summarised within the report. The December month end position reflected a projected outturn of £75.119m, with a net budget variance of £22.892m. This included net timing movements from 2022/23 of £25.596m. The current forecasts continued to present challenging delivery timescales therefore there might be further slippage at year end. A number of macro-economic factors continued to affect the Capital Plan in 2022/23. Unprecedented levels of inflation, along with disruption in the construction materials supply chain, continued to impact on the wider economy and consequently the Council. A surge in demand coupled with constraints on supply had led to price increases, shortages and longer lead times. The impact of that on tender prices for major projects and the wider Capital Plan continued to be assessed. Current legally committed projects had a small risk of impact and block programmes of work could operate within a cash constrained budget and were considered lower risk, however would impact on the scale of project delivery from the blocks. The most significant risk laid in the contracts being tendered this year which might result in a budget pressure. Any financial implications from those market conditions will continue to be reported through the regular budget monitoring cycle with any longer term impacts reflected in the financial planning process. In anticipation of inflationary pressures an inflation contingency of £1.253m was established at the 2021/22 year end to support potential budget pressures. That contingency was increased by £0.496m at the first two quarters and was being increased by a further £1.752m in this third quarterly monitoring, giving a revised contingency of £3.501m which a timing movement was being requested for into 2023/24 to support the 2023/24-2032/33 Capital Investment Plan. Appendix 2 to the report contained a list of the block allocations approved for this year and the various approved and proposed projects to be allocated from them within the 2022/23 Capital Plan, whilst Appendix 3 contained a list of estimated whole project capital costs for single projects which would not be completed in the current financial year.

4.2 Members highlighted that it was encouraging that various projects relating to the early years expansion and new school provision were continuing. In response to a question regarding the level of expected spending on the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme to 31 March 2023, the Acting Chief Financial Officer confirmed that significant works were expected within this financial quarter, and that the projected spend was expected to be reached. The Chief Executive confirmed that the scale and volume of work on the project was increasing, and it was expected that the forecast would be proved accurate. Regarding spending within Land and Property Infrastructure on free school meals, Ms Douglas explained that the spending referred to in the report related to works to improve the capacity of kitchens in schools to allow them to deliver meals to a greater number of pupils across the region.

**DECISION  
AGREED:-**

- (a) **the projected outturn in Appendix 1 to the report as the revised capital budget and approved the virements required;**
- (b) **to note the list of block allocations detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; and**

(c) to note the list of whole project costs detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.

5. **BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2023**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Acting Chief Financial Officer which provided an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2022 and advised of the projected balances at 31 March 2023. The unaudited Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £9.848m at 31 March 2022. The General Fund useable reserve was projected to be at least £8.421m at 31 March 2023 in line with the Council's Financial Strategy. The total of all useable balances, excluding development contributions, at 31 March 2023 was projected to be £49.691m as summarised in the report. The projected balance on the Capital Fund of £9.163m would be affected by any further capital receipts, developer contributions, interest credited and any expenditure authorised to be financed from the Fund during the remainder of the financial year.

**DECISION**

**AGREED to:-**

- (a) note the projected revenue balances as at 31 March 2023 as contained in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report; and
- (b) note the projected balance in the Capital Fund as contained in Appendix 3 to the report.

6. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

**DECISION**

**AGREED** under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act

**SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS**

7. **PRIVATE MINUTE**

The Private Section of the Minute of the meeting held on 6 December 2022 was approved.

***The meeting concluded at 10.50 am***

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## **FINAL REVENUE VIREMENTS AND EARMARKED BALANCES 2022/23**

**Report by Acting Chief Financial Officer  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**14 MARCH 2023**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the final 2022/23 budget virements and approval to carry forward identified earmarked budgets to 2023/24.**
- 1.2 The monitoring of the General Fund Revenue Budget at the end of January has identified the final virements and earmarked balances for 2022/23. These include routine virements in Appendix 1 and earmarked balances in Appendix 2, where it has been identified that budget is required to be carried forward to support expenditure in 2023/24.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:**
  - (a) approves the virements in Appendix 1;**
  - (b) approves the earmarked balances in Appendix 2; and**
  - (c) delegates authority for the remainder of the financial year to allow the Acting Chief Financial Officer to approve any year-end budget adjustments required to reflect additional 2022/23 funding allocations.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 During 2022/23, and most recently at the meeting held on 14 February 2023, the Executive Committee approved a number of revenue budget virements. The original projections on which the February virements were based related to actual spend to 31 December 2022. Since then, notification of further Scottish Government grant funding and work on projected expenditure and income has identified the requirement to seek approval for final budgetary adjustments.
- 3.2 Approval is also being sought for delegated authority for the remainder of the financial year to allow the Acting Chief Financial Officer to approve any year-end budget adjustments required to reflect additional 2022/23 funding allocations. Any adjustments actioned through this delegated authority will be reported to the Executive Committee as part of the 2022/23 outturn report in June 2023.

### **4 VIREMENTS REQUIRED**

4.1 The virements required fall into two categories as follows:

(a) **2022/23 – Routine Virements (Appendix 1)**

This adjustment supplements the virements approved by the Executive Committee during 2022/23 to date and are detailed in Appendix 1. Final approvals are now sought to reflect:

- i. an additional contribution from Scottish Government towards the recurring costs associated with SNCT pay offer for 2022/23 of 6% (not yet agreed);
- ii. a reduced borrowing requirement due to timing movements in the capital programme to be transferred to Treasury Reserve (£600k) to smooth capital financing requirements in future years.

(b) **Earmarked Balances (Appendix 2)**

These also supplement the earmarked balances approved by the Executive Committee during 2022/23 to date. These virements are detailed in Appendix 2 and earmarking is required:

- i. where projects or initiatives will now be completed in 2023/24; and
- ii. to reflect DSM carry forward projections including Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) funding

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no additional costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The main risk is that after the earmarked balances are carried forward into 2023/24, the Services overspend their remaining budget at year-end, this is mitigated by year-end adjustments which will reduce earmarked balances in relevant services if required.

### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

There are no significant effects on the economy, community or environment.

### **5.5 Climate Change**

No effect on carbon emissions are anticipated from the recommendation of this report.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation is required as a result of this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

6.1 Directors and their staff, where appropriate, have been involved in and agreed the compilation of the final virements.

6.2 The Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications are being consulted and any comments received will be reported to the meeting.

## Approved by

**Suzy Douglas**  
**Acting Chief Financial Officer**

### Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Suzy Douglas	Acting Chief Financial Officer

### Background Papers:

**Previous Minute Reference:** - Executive Committee, 14th February 2023

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Finance can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at: Suzy Douglas, Acting Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA.

Telephone – 01835 824000 X5881  
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Budget Virement Requirement

Finance & Corporate Governance

No. of Virements 1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Finance & Corporate Governance	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Loan Charges	£	£	£
Budget Head	Capital Financing Costs	(600,000)	0	0

**To**

Department	Financed by	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Transfers to/from Reserves	£	£	£
Budget Head	Capital Financing Costs	600,000	0	0

**Because**

Reduced borrowing requirement due to timing movements in the capital programme to be transferred to Treasury Reserve (£600k) to smooth capital financing requirements in future years.
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**Budget Virement Requirement**                      **Financed by**    **No. of Virements**    1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Financed by	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Revenue Support Grant	£	£	£
Budget Head	Income	(658,000)	(658,000)	(658,000)

**To**

Department	Education & Lifelong Learning	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Secondary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	340,000	340,000	340,000

Service	Primary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	318,000	318,000	318,000

<b>Total</b>		<b>658,000</b>	<b>658,000</b>	<b>658,000</b>
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**Because**

To allocate additional contribution from Scottish Government towards the recurring costs associated with SNCT pay offer for 2022/23 of 6% (not yet agreed).
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Budget Virement Requirement

Infrastructure & Environment

No. of Virements 1

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Infrastructure & Environment	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Housing Strategy & Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(47,000)	47,000	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	47,000	(47,000)	0

**Because**

To earmark balance of Scottish Government funding into 2023/24 to deliver a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy for Scottish Borders Council (£21k) and Green Growth Accelerator (£26k).

**Budget Virement Requirement**

**Social Work & Practice**

**No. of Virements 1**

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Social Work & Practice	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Older People	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(650,000)	650,000	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	650,000	(650,000)	0

**Because**

To earmark the balance of Adult Social Care external funding into 2023/24 (£650k).
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**Budget Virement Requirement**      **Education & Lifelong Learning**      **No. of Virements**    3

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Education & Lifelong Learning	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Secondary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(426,316)	426,316	0

**To**

Department	Education & Lifelong Learning	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Primary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	47,223	(47,223)	0

Department				
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	379,093	(379,093)	0

<b>Total</b>		<b>426,316</b>	<b>(426,316)</b>	<b>0</b>
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**Because**

To earmark projected Devolved School Management (DSM) carry forwards budget from 2022/23 into 2023/24 as per recent forecasting. This virement will bring the total DSM carry forward to £2,168k.

**2 Virement is required from**

Department	Education & Lifelong Learning	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Primary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	73,973	(73,973)	0

**To**

Department	Education & Lifelong Learning	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Secondary Schools	£	£	£
Budget Head	Employee Costs	(48,954)	48,954	0

Department				
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	(25,019)	25,019	0

<b>Total</b>		<b>(73,973)</b>	<b>73,973</b>	<b>0</b>
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**Because**

To reduce projected Pupil Equity fund (PEF) carry forward from 2022/23 into 2023/24 to cover employee contracts until the end of the academic year. This virement will bring the total PEF carry forward to £819k.

**3 Virement is required from**

Department	Education & Lifelong Learning	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Additional Support Needs	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	(10,000)	10,000	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	10,000	(10,000)	0

**Because**

To earmark projected South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) carry forward into 2023/24 to cover Nurture planned spend until the end of the academic year.

**Budget Virement Requirement      Resilient Communities      No. of Virements    5**

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Resilient Communities	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Neighbourhood Support Fund	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(1,350,278)	1,350,278	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	1,350,278	(1,350,278)	0

**Because**

To earmark budget into 2023/24 for Local Authority Covid Economic Recovery (LACER) Fund (£543k), Financial Insecurity Fund (£263k) and Anti-Poverty Strategy - Cost of Living Support (£545k).

**2 Virement is required from**

Department	Resilient Communities	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Economic Development	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(765,315)	765,315	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	765,315	(765,315)	0

**Because**

To earmark for delivery in 2023/24, No One Left Behind (NOLB) budget, funded by Scottish Government (£677k), Borderlands Business Infrastructure project (£31k) and Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) Boost (£58k).

**3 Virement is required from**

Department	Resilient Communities	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Scottish Welfare Fund	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	(150,000)	150,000	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	150,000	(150,000)	0

**Because**

To earmark projected underspend in Scottish Welfare Fund to support those in need in 2023/24 (£150k).

**4 Virement is required from**

Department	Resilient Communities	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Customer Advice & Support Services	£	£	£
Budget Head	Transfer Payments	(11,710)	11,710	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	11,710	(11,710)	0

**Because**

To earmark balance of Tenant Grant Fund budget into 2023/24 (£12k).

**5 Virement is required from**

Department	Resilient Communities	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Neighbourhood Support Fund	£	£	£
Budget Head	Supplies & Services	(34,500)	34,500	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	34,500	(34,500)	0

**Because**

To earmark budget into 2023/24 for King's Coronation Fund (£34.5k). Drawdown from unallocated Reserves agreed by Council on 16 February 2023.

**Budget Virement Requirement**

**Strategic Commissioning & Partnership No. of Virements 1**

**1 Virement is required from**

Department	Strategic Commissioning & Partnership	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service	Information Technology	£	£	£
Budget Head	Third Party Payments	(2,114,543)	2,114,543	0

**To**

Department		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Service		£	£	£
Budget Head	General Fund Reserve - Earmarked Balances	2,114,543	(2,114,543)	0

**Because**

To earmark into 2023/24 available T34 revenue budget to tie in with current planned delivery (£2.1m).
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## **CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2023/24**

**Report by Acting Chief Financial Officer**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**14 March 2023**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the refreshed Corporate Procurement Strategy for 2023/24 ahead of publication.**
- 1.2 The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 sets out specific duties for contracting bodies (including Local Authorities). These duties include the publishing of a procurement strategy and an annual report on delivery of the strategy. The appended Corporate Procurement Strategy for 2023/24 aligns with the Council Plan approved by Council on 23 February 2023.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee approves the Corporate Procurement Strategy as set out in Appendix 1.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 During 2021/22 the Council spent in the region of £183m with third party suppliers and providers on goods, services and works. This figure comprises revenue and capital spend and is equivalent to more than 50% of the Council's net annual revenue budget.
- 3.2 The Corporate Procurement service provides both a strategic and operational procurement service to the organisation. Live Borders has access to strategic procurement services through service level agreements.
- 3.3 Nationally, the Scottish Government is leading procurement reform through The Procurement Reform Act (2014) which puts sustainability at the heart of good public sector procurement.
- 3.4 This Act created regulations across a number of matters, one of which is the requirement to prepare a procurement strategy. The strategy must set out how the Council intends to ensure that its procurement activity delivers value for money and contributes to its broader aims and objectives. The strategy must comply with the associated statutory guidance which lays out the required form, content, monitoring and reporting.
- 3.5 The existing procurement strategy expires at the end of 2022/23. This new strategy will commence from 1 April 2023 and is proposed to run for 2023/24. The strategy requires to be reviewed and appropriate revisions made at least annually.

### **4 CURRENT SITUATION**

- 4.1 The Corporate Procurement service has a crucial role to play in supporting the delivery of the strategic aims of the Council Plan. It is therefore essential that a challenging and ambitious procurement strategy meeting the aims of this plan is put in place.
- 4.2 Good progress has been made through the existing procurement strategy and improvement plan, which is evidenced through the 2021/22 annual procurement report approved by Executive Committee on 13 September 2022.
- 4.3 It is widely recognised that with the financial challenges the public sector faces, the role that strategic procurement has to play has never been more important. Further, these challenges require an imaginative and commercially focussed approach to be brought to the way the Council considers its supply chain and engages and manages its suppliers.
- 4.6 The new strategy therefore recognises the positive progress already made and maximises the opportunities for further improvements to be delivered in support of the Council's overall strategic ambitions and priorities.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no financial implications contained in the report however, the new strategy will support delivery of value for money, financial plan savings and other efficiencies.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

If no new strategy and supporting annual report is developed then the Council will not be compliant with statutory legislation with no benefit accessed from the opportunities the new strategy should offer.

### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no adverse equality issues arising from the report.

### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

Effective procurement supports a prosperous, fair and sustainable area, delivering best value as well as local economic, social and environmental benefits.

### **5.5 Climate Change**

There are no climate issues associated with this report.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

This Strategy makes provision for the local dimension and rural proofing.

### **5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to the Schemes of Administration or Delegation as a result of this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Chief Legal Officer (including as Monitoring Officer), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, Director (People Performance & Change), Communications and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and comments received have been incorporated into this final report.

**Approved by**

**Suzy Douglas**  
**Acting Chief Financial Officer**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Suzy Douglas	Acting Chief Financial Officer X5881

**Background Papers:** Scottish Borders Council 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023

**Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Suzy Douglas can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Suzy Douglas, [sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk)



# Corporate Procurement Strategy

2023-2024 Update

Sustainable procurement - making a real difference



# CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Vision and Ambition	4
Strategy Context	5
Council Plan	5
Digital Transformation	6
Policy Landscape and Tools	6
2018-2023 Review	8
Strategic Themes and Objectives	10
Social Care & Health Commissioned Services	11
Meeting Statutory Duties	12
General	12
Sustainable Procurement Duty	12
Adding Value to Communities through Procurement	13
Stakeholder Consultation/ Engagement	14
Climate Change	14
Procurement Legislation	15
Council Governance	17
Contract & Supplier Management	17
Value of Procurement 2018 - 2023	18
Commercial Ambition	19
Continuous Improvement	20
Team Development and Individual Skills Development	21
Monitoring/Reviewing and Reporting on the Strategy	22
Policies/Tools and Procedures	23
Glossary	24
Appendix 1 – Delivering the Strategy - Action Plan	25
Appendix 2 – Sustainable Procurement	26

# INTRODUCTION

The period since the publication of the previous Commercial and Commissioned Strategy for 2018-23 has been one of extraordinary challenges related to the effect on supply chains of Brexit, the Covid pandemic and other factors which continue to impact significantly on how public sector procurement is delivered generally and to which Scottish Borders Council has not been immune.

Additionally significant senior management changes during 2022 have led to Commercial and Commissioned Services being temporarily restructured and fully integrated into the wider Finance team. The Council Management Team in February 2023 approved further changes which are ongoing and will lead to the Commercial and Commissioned Services being permanently restructured as the Corporate Procurement Service.

On 23 February 2023, a new Council Plan was approved, setting out our strategic framework for action for the next financial year until 31 March 2024. This new Council Plan looks and is different from previous Corporate Plans. The reasons for this are to create a plan that:

- is short, simple and relatable for the public, but SMART, meaning composed of actions which are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.
- sets the strategic framework for the Council and for the Council's Financial Plans.
- operates in sync with the Council's Budget Setting Process.
- is informed by strong engagement with Elected Members.
- is effectively linked with a Performance Management Framework and an embedded culture of continuous improvement.

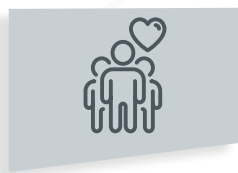
Reflecting the above changes this is an interim strategy representing an update to the former Commercial and Commissioned Services Strategy (now renamed Corporate Procurement Strategy). It will meet the Council's statutory obligations under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 whilst allowing time for the agreed structural changes in the service to be embedded and to take guidance from the updated Council Plan. It is planned to publish a fully updated procurement strategy in early 2024.

To support understanding of the terminology used across this document a glossary is provided of commonly used terms at the end. This aims to provide brief user friendly definitions of words, acronyms and phrases used in relation to public sector procurement.

# VISION AND AMBITION

The ambition of the team remains to make a difference by contributing directly to the related values in the Council Plan.

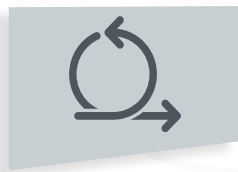
## Strategic Context and Vision: Our Values



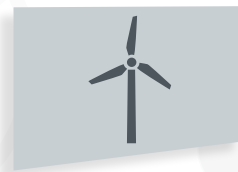
**People Focused** - working collaboratively with colleagues & partners, everything we do is for the benefit of our communities



**Inclusive & Fair** - we ensure everyone has the best opportunities & always seek to act fairly



**Agile** - we take advantage of new opportunities to deliver good value for money and we maximise the use of all digital opportunities



**Sustainable** - we are passionate about the prospects of future generations, we demonstrate this in our decisions and delivery and ensure we live within our means

In support of these values the continued themes will underpin all strategic procurement activity during the period of this strategy.

Support our local supply market and the economy

Deliver sustainable, flexible and innovative procurement

Identify effective and efficient procurement policy and process improvements

Deliver added value through savings and benefits

Develop commercial awareness across the organisation

# STRATEGY CONTEXT

## Council Plan

The current Council Plan 2023-2024 sets out the Council's ambitions and priorities for the year ahead. It outlines what we want to achieve and how we intend to do it. It builds on our Corporate Plan for 2018-2023, and includes those big developments, such as the Scottish Borders Climate Change Route Map and our Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy, which were identified in the Refresh of the Corporate Plan last summer.

The Council Plan is based on 6 outcomes that we aim to deliver for the Scottish Borders. Five of the outcomes focus on improving the wellbeing of citizens within the Scottish Borders and making our region a more sustainable and better place to live, work in and to visit. The sixth outcome is about developing a Council that is as effective and efficient as it can be – we need to do this in order to deliver on the other five outcomes.

FOCUS	OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the wellbeing of citizens within the Scottish Borders and making our region a more sustainable and better place to live, work in and to visit</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean, green future</li> <li>Fulfilling our potential</li> <li>Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure</li> <li>Empowered, vibrant communities</li> <li>Good health and wellbeing</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a Council that is as effective and efficient as it</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working together improving lives</li> </ol>

## Delivering our Outcomes

 <p><b>Clean Green Future</b></p>	<p>Incorporating biodiversity and nature restoration across 950 hectares of greenspace.</p>	<p>Collecting the waste of over 59,000 households, and managing over 70 recycling points and 7 community recycling centres, while achieving the top recycling rate for rural councils.</p>
 <p><b>Fulfilling Our Potential</b></p>	<p>Delivering high quality education to over 16,000 children across 59 primary schools and 9 secondary schools.</p>	<p>Delivering over 1.5 million school meals per year to pupils across our primary and secondary schools.</p>
 <p><b>Strong Inclusive Economy, Transport and Infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Maintaining over 1,800 miles of public roads across the region, as well as some 490 miles of public footway, more than 1200 bridges and structures and 860 miles of walking and access routes.</p>	<p>Last year, bringing in £5.5 million of additional funding to spend on 24 Economic Development projects.</p>
 <p><b>Empowered, Vibrant Communities</b></p>	<p>Supporting over 80 community groups with £274,000 in grant funding through our Community Fund and £499,000 to 77 groups via our one-off 'Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund'.</p>	<p>Supporting our communities through the cost of living crisis by providing £1.2m of additional funding.</p>
 <p><b>Good Health and Wellbeing</b></p>	<p>Providing over 10,500 Care at Home Hours and over 14,500 Supported living hours per week to support people to live at home independently.</p>	<p>Maintaining 187 play parks.</p>

Paying a living wage to the largest workforce in the Region, Scottish Borders Council, delivering excellent services daily

## Digital Transformation

Unit4 Business World went live in April 2017 to deliver a purchase to payment solution as part of the wider Council ERP system. It creates a real opportunity to transform our approach by using the benefits of the ERP system to support our work.

Within the overall ERP system and specifically the elements relating to the process from the decision to buy through to payment for that purchase, our strategy is to establish simple and standard processes across the organisation to support the management of expenditure. The key objectives relating to that work are;

- Maximising the automation of transactional processes
- Adopting master data across suppliers, contracts and products
- Using spend analysis data to support procurement decisions
- Creating efficiencies in support of front line service delivery
- Meeting the obligations contained in the EU Directive on electronic invoicing in public procurement

**Business World has been enhanced by the addition of a further digital resources:**

- An invoice capture scanning solution
- Contract and supplier management system

A business case has been completed to add an additional module which would allow ERP system users to access a marketplace of e-catalogues to enable purchases from contracted suppliers.

## Policy Landscape and Tools

To meet the post Brexit objectives of our strategy we actively utilise a variety of best practice tools, mechanisms and approaches. These are supported by operational process and procedures in line with corporate policy. A selection of these methods is noted below. The key is how we use these tools, rather than the tool themselves.

### **The Procurement Journey/Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) /PCS-Tender**

The use of this suite of national procurement tools facilitates best practice and consistency across all our activity by bringing together each of the steps involved in procurement.

### **Sustainable Procurement**

The Council policy 'Adding Value to the Community through Procurement' has been embedded into the new strategy to ensure every procurement project is considered for additional opportunities such as community benefits. The review below includes summaries of the positive outcomes from this policy.

In line with this and other strategy commitments, we have developed a Sustainable Procurement Charter. It can be found at Appendix 2. The charter lays out each of our principles, standards and the expectations for suppliers who would like to work with us.

## Fair Work First

Through its own accreditation as a Living Wage employer, the Council recognises the benefits of fair work. Accordingly it has adopted the Fair Work First approach which aims to drive high quality and fair work across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to its procured contracts, where it is relevant to do so. Fair Work First asks businesses bidding for a public contract to commit to adopting the following:

- appropriate channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition
- investment in workforce development
- no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts
- action to tackle pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace
- providing fair pay for (for example, payment of the Real Living Wage)
- offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment
- oppose the use of fire and rehire practices.

## Public Procurement Priorities

During 2021/2022, the Public Procurement Group for Scotland, a leadership group led by the Scottish Government and the Centre of Expertise (including Scotland Excel) set the strategic direction for public procurement in Scotland through the development of a set of public procurement priorities for all public sector procurement leaders.

These priorities can be found [here](#). Scottish Borders Council is making good progress across the majority of these indicators.

# 2018-2023 REVIEW

- Building on the benefits of the Business World Enterprise Resource Planning System, a number of positive policy and process improvements have been delivered during the period including live Supplier Master File reduction in line with the Council's GDPR obligations and the introduction of Purchase Cards to reduce small value/risk transactions in the invoicing process.
- Scottish Borders Council received an overall score of 78% in the 2018 PCIP, placing it in the F1 Band and well above the Scottish local authority average. This represents an increase of 8% on 2016.
- 2019 the Council was successful in receiving Living Wage accreditation recognising the Council's commitment to pay all directly employed and regular third-party contracted staff the real Living Wage
- Supported contractors in 2019 who were preparing to bid for the Council's new Repair and Maintenance Framework opportunity, the team together with the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) by holding supplier engagement drop in sessions and delivering bespoke support and training on Public Contracts Scotland.
- Worked with multi agency partners to develop and implement a school holiday programme for Early Years families in the Scottish Borders to ensure vulnerable children in the most deprived areas had access to vital support over the school summer break. Through the community benefits rebate clause in the National Groceries Framework, the Council was able to make funding available to the programme to cover the cost of all the groceries for the six week programme.
- In 2019 the Council awarded a four-year contract, worth £44,000 to maintain gardens for tenants of Scottish Borders Council Homeless Temporary Accommodation, to the Borders Green Team, a Hawick-based social enterprise. Borders Green Team trades as a business with a social and/or environmental benefit.
- Covid 19 Pandemic Response 2020. Within days of the first lockdown in March 2020, and while working closely with Business Gateway, the team developed a process to facilitate the payment of business support grants within the Scottish Borders exceeding payments of £72M. Specific supplier funding support to sustain key services was provided to critical providers, including £1.13m to Early Years Providers and £1.23m to Transport Operators. The Social Work Contracts team developed guidance and materials to facilitate the payment of in excess of £1.5m to support the long term sustainability of our key social care providers. A dedicated cross functional team was created to consider the sourcing, supply and distribution of PPE and cleaning materials across all services of the Council which saw a 357% increase in total PPE spend.
- Invoices paid within 30 days has increased from 85% (2018) to 93% (2022) with 100% of invoices now paid electronically.
- Hawick Flood Protection Scheme commenced in 2020 and has delivered Community Benefits including: 59 employment opportunities, 44% of workforce from local area, Educational activities across schools, engaging and supporting Community Groups and Community Projects or Events including local sponsorships and donation of materials to local groups.
- In 2021 the team delivered the Council's first Commercial Awareness Week. This was developed to support the launch of the new corporate Contract Management Framework whilst also raising awareness of what we mean by commercial and why it is important.



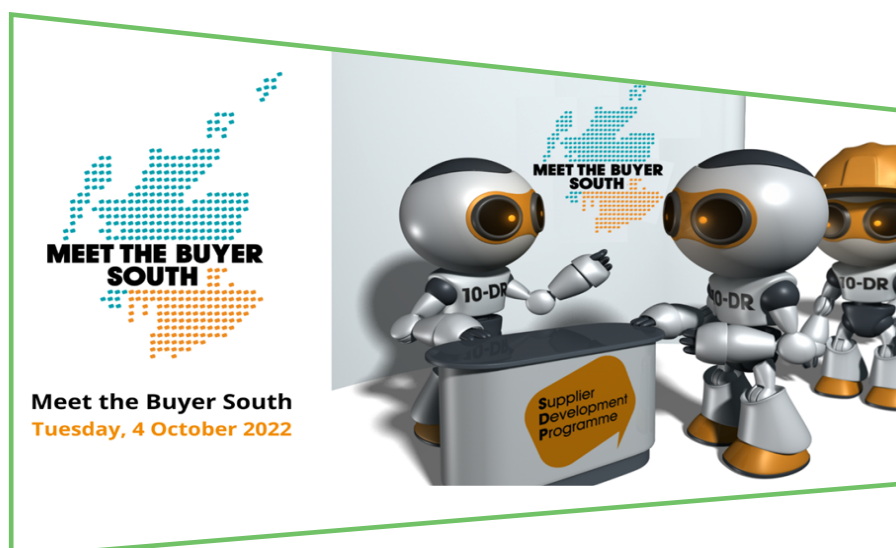


## Commercial Awareness Week Programme



Time	Monday 15th	Tuesday 16th	Wednesday 17th	Thursday 18th	Friday 19th
10am	<b>1. Launch of week ahead</b> Netta Meadows, Chief Executive	<b>5 Using Markets to Drive Commercial Value</b> Scotland Excel (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 40 mins	<b>9. How to handle price variations</b> Scotland Excel (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 40 mins	<b>13. Serious Organised Crime in the Borders? Surely not? Business Continuity</b> Brian MacFarlane (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 30 mins	<b>17. Proactive Contract Management – Annual Reports</b> Scotland Excel (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 40 mins
11am	<b>2. Talking Heads –</b> What commercial means to Debbie Hosie, Catering Manager 5 mins	<b>6. What style of Negotiator are you?</b> Take the Quiz! 5 mins	<b>10. Talking Heads –</b> What commercial means to Lisa Stanners 5 mins	<b>14. Taking care of risk</b> Emily Elder Jill Stacey 30 mins	<b>18. Social Care &amp; Health – A commercial perspective</b> Jen Holland (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 40 mins
2pm	<b>3. Tips on managing Supplier Performance in practice</b> Ross Sharp Dent Caroline Jackson (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 30 mins	<b>7. Negotiation Techniques</b> Scotland Excel (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 40 mins	<b>11. Writing Invitations to Tender with commercial in mind</b> Julie Caughey Procurement Consultant (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 30 mins	<b>15. What does Climate Change mean for commerciality?</b> Michael Cook Louise Cox (Pre-booking required – see Note 1) 30 mins	<b>19. Closing Comments and launch of ideas portal and feedback</b> David Robertson 10 mins
3pm	<b>4. Introduction to Contract Management</b> ELearning launch	<b>8. Tarmac's take on commercial</b> 10 mins	<b>12. Levenseat's take on Commercial</b> 10 mins	<b>16. Talking Heads –</b> What does Commercial mean to Nick Byers 5 mins	<b>THANK YOU – WE HOPE YOU FIND THE WEEK INSPIRING ☺</b>

- In 2022 the team was nominated for the Team of Year Award at the Purchase to Pay Network event based on the Procurement team procuring and overseeing the contract and supplier management of a contracts portfolio with a total value in excess of a billion pounds, the Purchasing team overseeing purchase order requisitions with a value circa £105m and the Payments team managing over 140,000 transactions each year with a value in excess of £287m.
- In 2022 the team co-hosted the first Meet the Buyer South event in Selkirk with headline partners Supplier Development Programme, South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), and Dumfries and Galloway Council. 239 attendees on the day with the post-event survey highlighted that 84% of Scottish SMEs were more likely to bid for public sector contracts after participating in Meet the Buyer South. "This was not what I expected from the public sector – rightly or wrongly I had thought it would be a lot stuffer and more formal! But the event was great, everybody was helpful and friendly, and this didn't just reflect on the public sector but on how Scotland is go-ahead in business in general."



# STRATEGIC THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives from the previous strategy remain relevant in the context of the new Council Plan for 2023-24 and have been retained.

Working Together, Improving Lives				Clean, Green Future
Strategic Themes - 2 & 3	Strategic Theme - 5	Strategic Themes - 3, 4 & 5	Strategic Themes - 2 & 4	Strategic Themes - 1 & 4
Team Consistency	Commercial Skills	ERP Opportunities	Continuous Improvement	Sustainability
Lead the development of fit for purpose, relevant template and guidance materials recognising SG Procurement Journey materials and Implementation of Supplier Network.  Consider outputs from appraisals to support individual development needs - procurement competency framework can be used for self-assessment.	Support the wider development of commercial skills across the Council by taking a lead role in implementing and promoting the use of Supplier Network for contract and supplier management; Lead on developing data-driven analysis of spend and identify opportunities for local spend growth.  Consider Spend Management opportunities.	Use Spikes & BW to maximise contract spend/identifying and reporting on off contract spend.	With reference to the 2018 PCIP, review the skills and competences of the procurement team and produce and implement an action plan to make good any knowledge/skills gaps.	Ensure that sustainability considerations are documented and embedded in all procurement processes, updating these in line with new SG requirements; support the delivery of Meet the Buyer South; support the sustainability officer to deliver on their objectives.
Support and actively contribute to the development and embedding of new procurement processes - particularly use of the Supplier Network.	Promote the use of Supplier Network and support service dept. by providing guidance and training support for the same.	Consideration of Proactis Marketplace and further development of the Product Strategy.  Development of the Physical & Virtual Purchase Card Strategy.	Carry out procurement skills self-assessment and identify relevant training opportunities.	Ensure that all procurement exercises incorporate sustainability considerations, liaising with services and the sustainability officer as necessary.
	Develop Data Analysis/Reporting from BW and Contract Management systems to monitor all stakeholder/service/Council wide outputs and ID opportunities.		Further develop the Commercial & Commissioned Services Quarterly Dashboard.	Lead all activities on sustainable procurement; coordinate the delivery of community benefits; improve and develop sustainability reporting.  Community Wealth Building - next steps.

Theme	Objective	
1	Support our local market and the economy	to grow the Councils local supply base to increase the proportion of Council spend within the area
2	Deliver sustainable, flexible and innovative procurement	to capture opportunities while balancing priorities
3	Identify effective and efficient procurement policy improvements	to maximise the benefit from the investment in technology through the new ERP system
4	Deliver added value through savings and benefits	to make a positive and measurable impact through procurement opportunities
5	Develop commercial awareness across the organisation	to benefit from a commercial approach to key supplier and partner relationships

These priority areas are fully detailed in the *Delivering the Strategy - action plan* provided as Appendix 1.

# SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH COMMISSIONED SERVICES

Since the publication of the previous strategy, Scottish Borders Council has reviewed and is currently restructuring the way it commissions its social care & health services.

Key to this restructure was the creation in September 2021 of a new service - Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships, which now has responsibility for all social care and health commissioning activities, including forecasting, capacity planning, service planning and design, contract monitoring and management. This restructure has led in the redeployment of relevant members of staff and the transfer of duties to Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships.

The Corporate Procurement Service remains responsible for all competitive tendering activities and will continue to execute procurements, on behalf of Strategic Commissioning & Partnerships, where competition is deemed the most appropriate route to engage with external providers but with the establishment of a separate function which is developing its own strategies, processes and procedures, social care and health service commissioning no longer falls within the purview of the Corporate Procurement Strategy.



# MEETING STATUTORY DUTIES

## General

The aims and objectives of the Corporate Procurement Service lay out clearly how we intend to make sure our procurement activity supports carrying out the Councils function and purpose.

All our procurement activity, regardless of value, will be carried out in a manner to ensure that:

- All suppliers are treated equally and without discrimination
- All activity is transparent and proportionate
- All regulated activity complies with the sustainable procurement duty

We will work closely with the Supplier Development Programme and our colleagues in Economic Development and Business Gateway to access support for the supply chain.

## Sustainable Procurement Duty

Before the Council buys anything, it should think about how it can improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of our area, with a particular focus on reducing inequalities. Another important area is how the Council facilitates the involvement of SME's, Third Sector bodies and Supported businesses and how it will use procurement to promote innovation. Of equal importance is the consideration of any environmental opportunities by considering the impact of the purchase on, for instance, climate change, waste production or scarce materials.

The Council's 'Sustainable Procurement Charter', covering all of these key factors is included at Appendix 2. The charter brings together different areas of policy, each of which contribute to our commitment to working in an ethical, responsible and sustainable way.

The Charter builds upon the clear benefits of such an approach and has been developed to play a key role in the promotion of social, economic and environmental best practice. It is an integral part of our procurement activity and delivers compliance with our new sustainable procurement duty from the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

The Charter clearly defines our commitment to suppliers in terms of our practices across important areas such as the importance of equalities, the encouragement of the Scottish Living Wage and consideration of our local market; while including the principles and standards being sought from suppliers covering our zero tolerance approach to Modern Slavery and human trafficking, compliance with Health & Safety requirements and Data Protection considerations.

## Adding Value to Communities through Procurement

Adding Value to Communities through Community Benefits or 'social value' requirements in public sector procurement ensures that wider local economic and social issues are considered when delivering construction works, service or supplies contracts. This delivery of additional benefit beyond the core purpose of a contract opportunity can help to maximise the impact of public sector spending on local communities. This is achieved through the inclusion of specific clauses within contracts known as community benefit clauses (CBCs). It is intended that this policy provides a corporate approach on how to meet this aim and promote the wider use of CBCs across all areas of Scottish Borders Council.



Maximising the added value to communities that procurement and other contracting opportunities offer can create a lever to address specific Council priorities and by doing so extend the value from public sector spend. There are many potential areas of opportunity, such as:

- Targeted Training and Recruitment – promote skills and labour/offer apprenticeships;
- Business Supply Chain Initiatives – supplier engagement/supply chain opportunities;
- Working and supporting the Third/Voluntary Sector;
- Community Engagement – volunteering days/supporting community groups;
- Education – work/school placements/career path support;
- Support for Community Initiatives – environmental improvements/grant schemes.

The statutory community benefit requirement introduced by the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, applies to contracts, including framework agreements and call-off contracts, which are estimated to be valued at £4 million or over. Our local policy does not aim to prescribe any specific value based threshold however requires the budget holder/contract owner to consider the inclusion of a CBC where the total estimated value of the contract exceeds £50,000.

The community benefit requirement for each contract should be considered on a case by case basis and in every case where added value is considered; it must be proportionate and avoid creating an unnecessary burden on the supply chain.

There is significant opportunity for the Council to champion and extend the application of CBCs beyond direct Council contracts. The Council enters into partnership arrangements, funding agreements, and other shared interest relationships with external organisations.

This policy may therefore be extended to apply (as appropriate) on a voluntary basis and in a proportionate manner where those type of agreements or relationships exist. It should also be possible to consider the adoption of the appropriate elements of this policy across our partners Live Borders and the wider Community Planning Partnership.

## Stakeholder Consultation/Engagement

At the beginning of and during procurement activity we will identify, engage and consult with stakeholder groups, as appropriate, which may include:

- The community
- The users of the service to be procured/commissioned
- The market
- Other Council Services/colleagues

This engagement will be proportionate to the project scale and may take a number of forms, such as online, face to face, or the creation of a focus group with appropriate representation of those involved or affected by the particular activity.



## Climate Change

### Climate Change Route Map (CCRM)

The first edition of the CCRM was published in June 2021. It sets out the scope of SBC's ambition to reach the Scottish Government target of net zero by 2045 and opportunities for action.

The CCRM supports Scottish climate change legislation - Action is a statutory duty and a policy imperative, because:

- Net Zero is now law. The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets a legally-binding "net-zero" target of all greenhouse gases by 2045, with interim targets for reductions of at least 56% by 2020, 75% by 2045.
- From 2022, all public sector bodies – including SBC - must set targets for achieving zero direct emissions from the 2010/11 baseline year, and for reduced indirect emissions.
- SBC report annually on compliance with climate change duties

The CCRM sets out 25 milestones across five core themes:

1. Resilience
2. Transport Use
3. Nature Based Solutions
4. Energy
5. Waste Management

The CCRM is considered in SBC's procurement strategy documents in the tender process.

SBC have made significant changes in how it operates, builds and improve facilities and work generally as part of the commitment to reducing its impact on the climate. The CCRM themes are at the centre of this change. Examples of this include:

- a reduction in the household waste sent to landfill and associated increase in recycling rates, to over 56% in the year to December 2020
- an estimated saving of over 74 tonnes of CO2 in 2019-20 from the pool car fleet
- implementing LED technology in street lights to reduce both maintenance and energy use
- an increasingly electric or hybrid vehicle fleet
- installation of electric vehicle charging points across the region
- a print project with IT partner CGI to reduce paper use which has saved over 38 tonnes of CO2
- Local butcher meat trial in the Scottish Borders secondary schools in 2022 with butchers from Lauder and Peebles supplying and delivering the fresh butcher meat for school lunches benefitting the local economy and reducing the food miles.

## Procurement Legislation

The Scottish Government is responsible for the development of national procurement policy and supporting guidance in Scotland. There are several key pieces of procurement legislation which set out the regulatory framework for public procurement across Scotland.

- The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
- The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015
- The Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016
- The Concession Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2016

These statutory instruments embedded European Union procurement directives (e.g. 2014/24/EU - Public Contracts) within national laws and have thus far been retained despite the UK's exit from the EU in January 2020.

Statutory guidance accompanies the Scottish Government legislation and Scottish Procurement Policy Notes (SPPNs) are published on an ad-hoc basis to provide advice on current policy issues. Several key SPPNs are listed below. These SPPNs are adopted in line with requirements and local policy.

## **Public procurement - taking account of climate and circular economy considerations: SPPN 3/2022**

SPPN3/2022 replaced SPPN 1/2021. It aligns climate change reporting duties with procurement policy and legislation which requires public bodies to consider and act on opportunities to improve social and environmental wellbeing. Procurement are working with the climate change officer to report ongoing progress against climate change and circular economy commitments. SBC use the Scottish Governments Sustainable Procurement Tools to consider and act on a number of climate change considerations.

## **Public procurement - prompt payment in the supply chain: SPPN 2/2022**

It is important for suppliers to be paid on time to deliver against these elements. The payment indicator at Scottish Borders consistently exceeds the target figure of 93% on invoices paid within 30 days as prompt payment is critical to the sustainability and resilience of the supply chain.

## **Fair Work First implementation - Scottish public procurement update: SPPN 6/2021**

Suppliers are asked to adopt the seven elements of Fair Work First as detailed in SPPN 6/2021 when bidding for public contracts. SBC evaluate a supplier's response to Fair Work First as part of the tender process.

Fair Work First asks businesses bidding for a public contract to commit to adopting the following:

- appropriate channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition
- investment in workforce development
- no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts
- action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace
- providing fair pay for workers (for example, payment of the real living wage)
- offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment
- oppose the use of fire and rehire practices.

Further, where relevant SBC have made payment of the real living wage for certain contracts as part of the tender process. Meeting the seven part criteria is essential to achieving both SBC and the Scottish Government's priority for sustainable and inclusive growth.

## **Supply chain resilience and diversity: SPPN 9/2020**

SPPN9/2020 gives practical steps that should be taken to support supply chains and reduce the risk of disruption to supply of goods or services cause by supply chain vulnerabilities and demand. SBC utilize the national sustainable procurement tools as a starting point for assessing supply chain vulnerabilities. The tools helps SBC optimise the economic, social and environmental outcomes of their procurement activity. Lifestyle impact mapping requires SBC to consider where in the procurement cycle risks and opportunities exist (raw materials, manufacturing and logistics, use and disposal or end of life management), and subsequently how they might be addressed.



## Council Governance

The Chief Financial Officer has responsibility for the production and management of the Corporate Procurement Strategy.

Council governance of procurement is contained across Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Standing Orders are the rules which govern how contracts for goods, services and works must be made with Financial Regulations containing the procedures for dealing with financial matters. This governance applies to every member and employee of the Council.

The internal governance framework has been revised in line with the legal requirements and the opportunities of the new ERP system. Adjustments have been made to the previous procurement thresholds with the aim of streamlining processes. Adherence to standing orders is crucial to ensure procurement is carried out in full compliance within the complex legal framework noted above. All the relevant rules are covered in the Council's Purchasing Handbook.

## Contract & Supplier Management

Contract and supplier relationship management is the on-going monitoring and management of contracts entered into with suppliers or partners for the provision of goods, services and works. It includes the pursuit of increased benefits and value from those contracts by maximising leverage, driving improvements and accessing innovation.

Scottish Borders Council is continuing to develop its processes and procedures for contract and supplier management, including adopting a risk based approach to the categorization and management of contracts with new requirements to include (as appropriate) key performance indicators to measure clear outcomes.

Individual services remain responsible for contract management within their area of activity but Scottish Borders Council has procured modules from the Proactis Source-to-Contract product to support services by providing a common software platform for contract management to sit alongside Business World Enterprise Resource Planning software and procurement specific tools including Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) and Public Contracts Scotland – Tender (PCS-T).

# VALUE OF PROCUREMENT 2018-2023

During 2021/2022, the Council spent approximately £183million with external suppliers across revenue and capital expenditure. The table below lays out how that money is spent across standard procurement classification groups.

ProClass Group Spend	Total Spend (£)	ProClass Group Spend	Total Spend (£)
Arts & Leisure	277,000	Highway Equipment & Materials	2,510,000
Catering	2,111,000	Horticultural	1,278,000
Cemetery & Crematorium	5,000	Housing Management	4,115,000
Cleaning & Janitorial	1,555,000	Human Resources	3,028,000
Clothing	229,000	ICT	19,923,000
Construction	38,195,000	Legal Services	352,000
Construction Materials	3,514,000	Mail Services	275,000
Consultancy	2,543,000	Public Bodies	8,058,000
Domestic Goods	24,000	Public Transport	4,664,000
Education	4,522,000	Social Care	47,182,000
Environmental Services	7,333,000	Sports & Playground Equipment	487,000
Facilities & Management Services	1,655,000	Stationery	98,000
Financial Services	12,459,000	Street & Traffic Management	866,000
Furniture & Soft Furnishings	952,000	Utilities	6,848,000
Health & Safety	654,000	Vehicle Management	5,973,000
Healthcare 1,317,000			

ProClass is a procurement classification not a finance classification. It is for classifying products and services that are purchased and not for classifying people, projects or budgets.

## Commercial Ambition

Each Procurement project will consider where opportunities may exist to reduce cost, access efficiencies or to access additional value. These areas of opportunity might include:

Opportunity	Ambition
Savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting the target value set in the project budget</li> </ul>
Market Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of category awareness to support approach to the market</li> </ul>
Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using data to better understand costs across specific areas of spend</li> </ul>
Cost reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of contract management to consider price or risk reductions</li> <li>Use of technology to simplify and reduce the cost of tendering, purchasing and payment transactions</li> </ul>
Demand Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeking ways to reduce or change how demand is fulfilled</li> <li>Identify opportunities to change to lower cost, innovative or alternative solutions</li> </ul>
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggregating Spend with other bodies to produce economies of scale</li> <li>Efficient use of resources</li> </ul>



# TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND INDIVIDUAL SKILLS FRAMEWORK

The Scottish Procurement Competency Framework (detailed below) identifies the skills and competencies required by people involved in the procurement process. It helps with the development of individuals' through a skills assessment and subsequent identification of training and development needs. This framework complements the Councils existing staff appraisal process. This will be used as a tool to underpin team development.

## Procurement Competency Framework (aligned to Government Purpose & CIPS Global Standards)

Infrastructure Foundations (Why)	Process (How)			Performance (What)	People (Who)
	Planning	Implementation	Delivery		
	Pre-market engagement	Tender	Post contract		
Corporate Strategy				Performance Management & Measurement <small>(including Benefits Tracking &amp; KPI's)</small>	Self-development
Procurement Strategy and Policy					Managing High Performing Teams
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commodity, Supplier &amp; SC Profiling</li> <li>Spend Analysis</li> <li>Market &amp; SC Analysis</li> <li>Specification development</li> <li>Building tender documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract Law &amp; T's &amp; C's</li> <li>EU and Regulated Tender Process</li> <li>Tender Evaluation</li> <li>Award &amp; Debrief</li> <li>Negotiation</li> <li>Alternative routes to market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract management</li> <li>Supplier management</li> <li>Supply chain management</li> <li>Inventory Management</li> <li>Distribution fleet and logistics</li> </ul>		Leading & Influencing
Governance and Compliance				Continuous improvement <small>(Including change Methodologies)</small>	Stakeholder Relationships
Technology					Communications
Standards & Conduct					
Early Engagement & role of intelligent client <small>(drives better outcomes)</small>	Commercial and Financial Awareness Commercial competence and business acumen; Commercial models; Business case development; Financial Management; Budgeting				
	Planning and Risk Management Project and Programme Management (PPM); Risk Management				
	Sustainability and Innovation Sustainable Procurement				

# MONITORING/REVIEWING AND REPORTING ON THE STRATEGY

The strategy objectives will be delivered through an action plan, detailed at Appendix 1. Performance against the action plan will be monitored by the Chief Financial Officer and reported through the relevant Scottish Borders Council Executive Committee on a regular basis.

Key performance indicators (KPI) will continue to be developed and linked to the Delivering the Strategy – Action Plan. A number of KPIs are currently reported to the Executive Committee through the wider corporate performance monitoring processes. We will also engage with stakeholders to ensure meaningful information is delivered as part of regular reporting of procurement performance.

As required by legislation, an annual report comprising all required elements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 is submitted to the Executive Committee and following approval, the report is issued to Scottish Ministers and published on the Councils website. As part of the annual report production process, the strategy will be reviewed and refreshed to take account of any updates to Council priorities and objectives.

Services will receive regular reports from the Procurement Business Partner to ensure the strategy is being delivered effectively within departments. Procurement delivery plans will continue to be developed in collaboration with Services encompassing all significant procurement due in the following 1-3 years. This allows for resource planning and scheduling and improves visibility and risk management of our activities. These planned contract opportunities require to be published as part of the new legislation, along with the Councils full contract register.

Strategy Ownership	Further Information
Approval process	Scottish Borders Council TITLE (Full Council, CMT etc.) - DATE
Led by	Suzy Douglas Interim Chief Financial Officer <a href="mailto:sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk">sdouglas@scotborders.gov.uk</a>
Delivered by	Ryan Douglas Procurement Business Partner <a href="mailto:RyanThomas.Douglas@scotborders.gov.uk">RyanThomas.Douglas@scotborders.gov.uk</a>

# POLICIES/TOOLS AND PROCEDURES

Item	Item
<a href="#">Community Plan</a>	This document, currently under consultation, contains the priorities and outcomes the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership want to achieve for the Scottish Borders
<a href="#">Corporate Plan</a>	The Council's corporate plan details what will be prioritised within the area
<a href="#">Procurement and Contract Standing Orders</a>	The procedural governance of the organisation through which procurement activities are undertaken
<a href="#">Financial Regulations</a>	These set out the financial policies in place
<a href="#">Control of Contractors Policy</a>	A policy defining the Council's Health and Safety requirements
<a href="#">Suppliers Procurement Guidance</a>	Working with suppliers to improve public sector procurement processes and dialogue
<a href="#">Selling to the Council</a>	Our website aims to make it as easy as possible for suppliers to do business with us
<a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Charter</a>	Our charter has been developed to promote social, economic and environmental best practice across all our procurement activities
<a href="#">Scottish Model of Procurement</a>	Balancing cost, quality and sustainability
<a href="#">Public Procurement Legislation</a>	Delivering procurement across EU and national legislation provides the foundations of the Scottish model of Procurement
<a href="#">Public Procurement</a>	The structure of public procurement in Scotland
<a href="#">Scottish Procurement Journey</a>	A series of procurement routes for all levels of procurement activity to facilitate best practice and consistency across the Scottish Public Sector
<a href="#">Public Contracts Scotland</a>	The national advertising portal for the Scottish public sector to post OJEU and sub threshold contract opportunity notices
<a href="#">Public Contracts Scotland Tender</a>	The national e-tendering system. A secure and efficient means for the Council and suppliers to use to manage tenders online
<a href="#">PCIP</a>	Full details of the Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme
<a href="#">Procurement Thresholds</a>	A series of value based thresholds subject to legislative regulation
<a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Tools</a>	This set of tools has been produced to assist the sustainable procurement process to comply with the duties of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
<a href="#">Supported Business</a>	A supported business' primary aim is the social and professional integration of disabled or disadvantaged

# GLOSSARY

<b>Collaboration</b>	Working with other partners to undertake joint or shared procurement activities with the intention of obtaining better value through the economies of scale and reduced procurement costs
<b>Commissioning</b>	This is the process used to assess the needs of people in the area, then to design and specify the appropriate services to deliver those needs in a cost effective and value for money way
<b>Community Benefits</b>	These are contract requirements that deliver wider benefits in addition to the core purpose of the contract. These will create added value and will be social, economic or environmental benefits
<b>Contract Management</b>	This is the management of contracts with suppliers or partners. It includes the tasks and activities to ensure the contract is delivered as per the terms. Activity can include the mobilisation of the contract, delivery throughout the term of the contract to expiry and decommissioning. It will also include supplier relationship and performance management
<b>Demand Management</b>	This is a way to reduce costs by managing requirements through many different methods such as forecasting, reducing options, increasing flexibility or considering distribution methods and frequency
<b>Goods</b>	Items that we buy include things such as catering provisions, office stationery and supplies, or the materials needed to build roads
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicators are measures out in place as part of the contract arrangements. These will be used to help manage delivery of the contract to a pre-agreed set of quality and quantity indicators
<b>P2P</b>	Procurement to Payment - electronic IT systems and processes used to manage the raising of purchase orders through to the payment of supplier invoices
<b>PCIP</b>	The Scottish Government led Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme and its associated assessment programme
<b>Procurement</b>	This is process of acquiring goods, services and works
<b>Purchasing</b>	The transactional stages of placing orders for goods, services or works, using P2P systems to receipt goods, services or works received and then to pay for them
<b>Regulations</b>	Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015; Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016; The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
<b>Services</b>	Services we buy might include care services, professional services to design works projects or repair and maintenance services
<b>Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's)</b>	Firms that employ less than 9 employees are classified as micro businesses, firms that employ less than 50 are classed as small and those employing less than 250 medium
<b>Sustainable Procurement</b>	A process where organisations meet their needs for goods, services and works in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life costs basis and generates benefits, not only for the organisation but for society, the economy and the environment
<b>Third Sector</b>	The group name for a range of organisations such as community groups, charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises or community interest companies. They can be everything between small and local or large multinational companies or charities
<b>Value for Money</b>	Value for money is the optimum combination of whole life costs quality and sustainability to meet our requirements
<b>Whole Life Costing</b>	Whole life costing takes into account the total cost of a product or service over its lifetime, from concept to disposal and including purchase, hire or lease, maintenance, operation, utilities, training and end of life disposal. It is important to take all of these costs into consideration when making decisions as in some cases the purchase cost is only a small proportion of the cost of operating it
<b>Works</b>	Construction works that we buy, including the construction and/or refurbishment of new and existing buildings, roads, bridges, parks or other open spaces



# APPENDIX 1 - DELIVERING THE STRATEGY - ACTION PLAN

Opportunity	Objective	Principal Actions
1 Support our local supply market and the economy	to grow the Council's local supply base to increase the proportion of Council spend within the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold regular supplier engagement events</li> <li>• Encourage a diverse range of suppliers to work with the Council</li> <li>• Support and improve access to contract opportunities by local SME's and the Third Sector</li> <li>• Introduce online tools to make best use of digital technology</li> </ul>
2 Deliver sustainable, flexible and innovative procurement	to capture opportunities while balancing priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full adoption of sustainable procurement through the suite of tools developed by the Scottish Government</li> <li>• Use whole life costing to balance cost, quality and sustainability</li> <li>• Secure the commitment of stakeholders of the new approach</li> <li>• Maximise added value through community benefits</li> <li>• Support the Scottish Borders Health &amp; Social Care partnership with an outcome based commissioning and procurement cycle</li> </ul>
3 Identify effective and efficient procurement and P2P policy improvements	to maximise the benefit from the investment in technology through the new ERP system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the implementation of ERP system, review the delivery mechanism of procurement/commissioning/contract management activities</li> <li>• Use data from the new ERP system to undertake spend/benchmarking activity/support decision making</li> <li>• Streamline (where possible) processes and procedures</li> <li>• Review and rationalise supply base</li> <li>• Reduce non-contracted spend</li> <li>• Improve reporting of strategic procurement and associated purchasing transactions</li> <li>• Ensure use of online tools maximised</li> </ul>
4 Deliver added value through savings and benefits	to make a positive and measurable impact through procurement opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create financial and efficiency savings through the approach to new contract opportunities</li> <li>• The early identification of collaborative opportunities</li> <li>• Challenge contract specifications</li> <li>• The development of key performance indicators to support measuring delivery of the strategy</li> <li>• Refresh existing category strategies</li> </ul>
5 Develop commercial awareness across the organisation	to benefit from a commercial approach to key supplier and partner relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed a common standard of contract management principles across the organisation</li> <li>• to access value and innovation</li> <li>• Support active contract and supplier management with a toolkit and guidance</li> <li>• Enhance the early engagement and inclusion of strategic procurement with services/projects</li> <li>• Introduce commercial targets to procurement activities</li> </ul>

# Sustainable Procurement Charter

Scottish Borders Council aims to be a responsible purchaser of goods, services and works. We set standards to make sure we undertake our activities in an ethical, responsible and sustainable way. This charter lays out a number of important principles and policy requirements of the Council to which we expect our suppliers to comply.



## Achieving our Sustainable Procurement duty

<p><b>Equalities</b></p> <p>We view the Scottish Borders as a place where everyone matters, where everyone should have equal opportunities and where everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. As a responsible employer the Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities to all of the Scottish Borders community, employees and suppliers alike. Consideration of equal opportunities is fully integrated into our procurement practices and is fully committed to the values and ethos of the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p><b>Disability Confident Scheme</b></p> <p>The Council is an accredited Disability Confident employer. We are committed to the aims of Disability Confident and would encourage our partners, suppliers and providers to demonstrate their commitment to the scheme and also become accredited Disability Confident employers. As appropriate, contracts or framework agreements may include clear performance indicators relating to the positive benefits of such a scheme.</p>	<p><b>Facilitating SME's, third sector and supported businesses in the procurement process</b></p> <p>Our procurement strategy aims to achieve a mixed economy of suppliers to support and develop our local rural market, particularly micro, small and medium sized enterprises, Third Sector organisations and supported businesses. This approach includes simplified and standardised public sector procurement practices, consideration of lotting and a range of hands-on assistance to the local supply chain to help reduce any barriers to involvement in procurement opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Promoting Innovation</b></p> <p>Influencing the market towards innovative solutions can focus public spending on sustainable goods, services and works and create an important catalyst for local job creation, sustainable innovation and market development. Our procurement strategy notes the importance of innovation through procurement and we encourage all our suppliers to consider an innovative approach to the way goods and services are delivered.</p>
<p><b>Fair Work Practices</b></p> <p>As a Living Wage employer, the Council is committed to encouraging the wider adoption of the Scottish Living Wage by suppliers and to support this has adopted the Scottish Government guidance on the Selection of Tenderers and Award of Contracts which addresses Fair Work Practices as part of the procurement for relevant contracts. The Living Wage is an hourly rate set by the Living Wage Foundation and is revised in November every year. The current rate is £10.90 (Oct 2022)</p>	<p><b>Consultation with Stakeholders</b></p> <p>Service User and, where appropriate, wider community consultation is an integral part of commissioning considerations. The strategic importance and complexity of required outcomes will mainly govern the level of consultation undertaken and the choice of the procurement route followed. The final decision on these matters will always be considered in light of what is likely to provide best value for the local community.</p>	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety Compliance</b></p> <p>The Council is committed to achieving a culture that ensures it complies with all current Health and Safety legislation and in so doing endeavours to provide safe places and safe systems of work. This principal extends to those employed to do contracted works for and on behalf of the Council. The Council will only employ contractors who are SSIP accredited</p>	
<p><b>Fairly &amp; ethically traded goods</b></p> <p>The Council supports the Fair Trade initiative because it reflects our commitment to sustainable development and offers the prospect that marginalised producers across the world will receive fairer deals for their produce. The Council will promote the use of fair trade products across all its services and raise awareness of fair trade amongst its staff and customers. The Council will (to the extent permitted by EU procurement legislation) embed Fair Trade into contracts with suppliers where it has a direct bearing on the required goods, services and works.</p>	<p><b>Provision of Food</b></p> <p>The procurement of food considers the wider community focus of improving the health and wellbeing of young people and communities in the Borders. Promoting a sustainable food supply chain by (where possible) the use of Scottish produce through collaborative contracts supports the delivery of healthy choices to support healthy eating. Food security and ethics are of equal importance and the Council follows Scottish Government guidance to ensure consideration of the highest levels of animal welfare.</p>	<p><b>Prompt payment within 30 days</b></p> <p>The effect of late payment on SME's can be significant, impacting cash flow and the ability to trade. As direct support the Council has a prompt payment policy and related performance indicator which aims to make payment of invoices within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice. To make sure this policy flows through all stages of the supply chain, our terms and conditions of contract obliges our contracted suppliers to make payment of valid invoices within a similar 30 day period.</p>	<p><b>Information/Data Management/Protection</b></p> <p>The Council regards information as a valuable corporate asset which must be obtained, processed and protected diligently, lawfully and ethically. The approach to information governance focuses on safeguarding customers, providing business transparency and ensuring legislative compliance. Relationships with 3rd parties who handle data on behalf of the Council, or with whom we share data are carefully managed. Contracts include information governance compliance conditions with these arrangements being documented and monitored. We will expect all suppliers to take the same robust approach to information management as we do, even after their contract has expired.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Impact and Climate Change</b></p> <p>The Council is committed to reducing its environmental impact, including carbon emissions, wherever possible. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places duties on public bodies to deliver their services in a way which supports this, including both internal activities, such as energy saving within buildings, and its work with partners. The way that the Council procures goods and services can have a huge environmental impact, and by purchasing items which can demonstrate a reduced negative effect on wildlife, natural resources and carbon emissions, we can reduce our carbon footprint and support suppliers to do the same.</p>	<p><b>Improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area</b></p> <p>Adding Value to Communities through Community Benefits or 'social' requirements in public sector procurement is intended to ensure that wider local economic and social issues are considered when delivering construction works, service or supplies contracts. This is achieved through the inclusion of specific clauses within contracts known as community benefit clauses (CBCs).</p>	<p><b>Conflict of Interest</b></p> <p>Council Officers and Members conducting business on behalf of the organisation have a responsibility to do so in a manner that is objective and ethical. As such we require any individual whether employee or supplier to declare such an interest before any procurement activity commences as the best way to handle conflicts of interest is to avoid them entirely.</p>	<p><b>Modern Slavery Act 2015</b></p> <p>The Council adopts a zero tolerance approach to modern slavery and human trafficking. We expect all those who work for and with us to adhere to this approach. As appropriate we will address areas of concern in the tendering process through requiring minimum standards and contract management.</p>





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#### PROCUREMENT SERVICES

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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S ANNUAL COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE REPORT: 2021/22**

**Report by Director Resilient Communities**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**14 March 2023**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of Scottish Borders Council's "Complaints Annual Performance Report for 2021/22", which is presented as Appendix 1. This sets out how many complaints have been received, how effectively complaints have been dealt with, trends over time and how Scottish Borders Council (SBC) compares to other similar rural Local Authorities and the national average. It also provides a summary of the eight performance indicators that the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) requires all Local Authorities to report against.**
- 1.2 The Annual Report is a requirement for all Local Authorities and allows the SPSO to assess the effectiveness of Councils' Complaint Handling Procedures (CHP). It also ensures an ongoing focus on learning from complaints received, to inform continuous improvement.
- 1.3 During 2021/22, SBC received 1257 complaints, of which 849 were defined as valid. In 2021/22 Scottish Borders Council's performance relating to the processing of complaints performs well against the Scottish National averages in many indicators, but performance is poorer in relation to indicators that measure timeliness of responses. In this area there has been a decline for a number of years.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 I recommend that the Committee:- notes the performance of handling complaints for the periods 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 gave the SPSO the authority to lead the development of a standardised complaints handling procedure to be used across the public sector.
- 3.2 In May 2012, the SPSO issued finalised guidance on the handling of complaints, 'Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure'. In November 2012 Scottish Borders Council approved a 'Complaints Handling Procedure' (CHP), based on this guidance, which then became publicly available and fully implemented during 2013.
- 3.3 In 2018-19, the SPSO conducted a review of their Model Complaints Handling Procedures (MCHP) to establish their effectiveness and usability. Following consultation across all sectors the MCHPs were revised to standardise the core text across all of Scotland's public services and to update the MCHPs in line with issues identified by the SPSO in their casework, research and through good practice.
- 3.4 The CHP defines a complaint as "any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf". It also defines how a complaint will be handled and the timescales to resolve any complaint received.
- 3.5 The objective of the (CHP) is to resolve complaints (i.e. customer dissatisfaction) as close to the point of service delivery and as soon as possible. The majority of 'Valid' complaints go through the Frontline 'Stage One' process where the complaint should be closed within 5 working days. However, if the complaint is complex, needing detailed investigation or is Escalated from Stage One because the customer is dissatisfied with the original response, it is considered an Investigation Stage 'Stage Two' complaint. Escalated complaints are known as Stage Two – Escalated complaints. All Stage Two complaints should be closed within 20 working days. If, after 'Stage Two', the customer is not satisfied with the response to their complaint or how it was handled, they can refer their complaint to the SPSO.
- 3.6 In August 2014, the SPSO issued guidance stating that the annual performance of Local Authorities handling of complaints should be formally presented in an annual report across eight specified key performance indicators. It was later confirmed that this report should be published.
- 3.7 Elected Members are also kept aware of key SPSO indicators on a quarterly basis through Scottish Borders Council's Corporate Performance reporting to Executive Committee. This information is also reported publicly on a quarterly basis ([www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance)).
- 3.8 In November 2015, it was agreed that SPSO decisions, recommendations and subsequent actions would be reported in the Complaints Annual Performance Report.
- 3.9 Live Borders complaints performance for 2021/22 is also included at the end of Appendix 1.

## 4 OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

- 4.1 The 'Scottish Borders Council Annual Complaint Performance Report 2021/22' (presented in Appendix 1 to this Report) is the way in which the Council complies with its statutory responsibility stemming from the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 4.2 The performance indicators in the report relate to 'Valid' complaints that were either opened and or closed within financial year 2021/22. These indicators are based on the eight key performance indicators developed by the SPSO in conjunction with all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. These are:
1. Complaints received per 1,000 of population
  2. Closed complaints
  3. Complaints upheld / not upheld
  4. Average time spent responding to complaints
  5. Complaints closed against timescales
  6. Complaints that were granted authorised extensions
  7. Customer satisfaction
  8. What we have learned, changed or improved
- 4.3 The number of complaints received in 2021/22 increased compared to 2020/21, and the number that were classified as 'Valid' increased; 849 valid compared to 780 in the previous year.
- 4.4 How the Council handled the 'Valid' complaints it received and closed in 2021/22 can be summarised as follows:
- (a) The number of 'Valid' complaints received in 2021/22 (849) meant that on average there were 7.4 complaints per 1,000 population in 2021/22, up from 6.8 in 2020/21.
  - (b) The proportion of closed complaints that were handled at Stage One reduced slightly from 85.4% in 2020/21 to 83.0% in 2021/22. This high percentage closure rate at Stage One is a positive indicator because it is more resource intensive to handle complaints at Stage Two compared to handling them at Stage One.
  - (c) The proportion of Stage One and Stage Two - Escalated complaints that were 'Upheld' has increased from 36.6% to 50.5% and from 22.2% to 44.8%. Whilst this is disappointing from a service delivery perspective, it does provide increased scope to learn from complaints. It is also a positive indicator in that officers are becoming better at identifying where services could have been delivered to a higher standard.
  - (d) The average time taken to respond to complaints at Stage One has risen to 7.1 days in 2021/22 from 5.9 days in 2020/21. Similarly, the average time taken to respond to complaints at Stage Two has risen to 30.5 days in 2021/22 from 23.1 days in 2020/21. The average time taken to respond to Stage Two - Escalated complaints has also risen to 42.2 days in 2021/22 compared to 41.6 days in 2020/21.
  - (e) The proportion of SBC's complaints closed against timescales for Stage One has increased to 80.6% (from 80% in 2020/21) from Stage Two has decreased to 49.6% (from 66% in 2020/21) and

from Stage Two - Escalated has increased to 27.6% (from 22% in 2020/21)

- (f) The proportion of SBC's Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Two - Escalated closed complaints that have been granted an authorised extension has increased from 1%, 3% and 6% respectively in 2020/21 to 1.3%, 8.7% and 10.3% respectively in 2021/22.
- (g) In 2021/22 a significantly larger number of Complaints Handling Customer Satisfaction Surveys have been sent out. However, the return rate of the surveys has fallen from 25% in 2020/21 to 17% in 2021/22. Of those people that completed the 'Complaints Handling Customer Satisfaction Survey' in 2021/22, 42% were either very or fairly satisfied with how their complaint was handled by the Council compared to 37% who were very or fairly dissatisfied. The highest levels of satisfaction were around how easy it was to make a complaint (57.1%) and customers feeling they were given the opportunity to fully explain their complaint (58.3%). Highest levels of dissatisfaction however were around the overall handling of a customer's complaint (52.4%), officers understanding of a customer's complaint (46.4%) and the key points of a customer's complaint were identified and responded to (46.4%).
- (h) Over the year, the Council recorded approximately 112 unsolicited comments and compliments for the services provided, a decrease from 192 in 2020/21. Of these 68 were compliments. These compliments related to areas such as kerb-side waste and recycling, roads, community recycling centres, health and social care, and customer services. These recorded compliments are submitted by customers online, or are received by Customer Advice and Support Services officers over the phone on the 0300 number or in emails sent to the enquiry mailbox. It should be noted that SBC also receives compliments directly to officers but these are not always recorded, and therefore cannot be included in these figures.

4.5 The Complaints Annual Performance Report 2021/22 also contains benchmarking information, comparing SBC to the performance for Scotland and its Family Group (similar Scottish Local Authorities, including Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, Dumfries & Galloway, Eilean Siar, Highland, Orkney Islands, Scottish Borders, and Shetland Islands). The highlights include:

- (a) In 2021/22 SBC received more complaints per 1,000 citizens (7.4) than the Family Group average of 6.2, but fewer than the Scottish average of 10.4. It is interesting to note that this is an increasing trend not only for SBC, but for Scotland and for our Family Group.
- (b) SBC closed more complaints at Stage One (83%) compared to the Family Group (74.4%), but fewer than the Scottish average (88.6%). At Stage Two, SBC closed less complaints (13.6%) compared to the Family Group (19%) but more than the Scottish average (7.5%). SBC closed fewer complaints at Escalation following Stage One than the Family Group (6.3%) and Scottish Average (3.8%). This indicates that SBC does not close as many



complaints at Stage One as other Local Authorities across Scotland, on average.

- (c) Similar to last year, a lower proportion of complaints made to SBC were upheld compared with the Scottish average, but more than the Family Group. Specifically, 50.5% of the Stage One complaints to SBC were upheld compared to 38.7% for Family Group and 55.1% for Scotland. The proportion of Stage Two complaints that were upheld for the Scottish Borders (37.4%) was higher than the Family Group average (35.5%) but lower than the Scottish average (38.9%); the proportion of Stage Two - Escalated complaints that were upheld for the Scottish Borders (44.8%) was higher than the level for the Family Group (42.5%) and lower than the Scottish average (45.6%). Overall, SBC is not far off the Scottish Average's for this indicator.
- (d) SBC's average response time for Stage One (7.1 days) was slower compared to both the Family Group (6.4) and Scotland (6.3). It was also slower at both Stage Two and Stage Two - Escalated. At Stage Two, the average time for SBC to respond was 30.5 days (Family Group 22.3 days, Scotland 20.7 days) and the Stage Two - Escalated complaints average time for SBC to respond was 42.2 days (Family Group 27.6 days, Scotland 18.6 days). It is fair to say that in addition to SBC's generally worsening average response time, that we are seeing the impact of the many pressures faced by the council following the Covid-19 pandemic. This is especially true of the Stage Two - Escalated complaints where complicated cases and small numbers have a large impact on the indicators.
- (e) SBC's proportion of Stage One complaints closed within timescales (80.6%) was higher compared to the Family Group (72.4%) and the Scottish average (67.1%). However, it was significantly lower at Stage Two (49.6%) than the Family Group (61.2%) and Scottish average (63.4%). It is also significantly lower for Stage Two - Escalated at 27.6% compared to 48% for the Family Group and 61.6% for the Scottish average. Whilst this is not a positive position for the council it is important to remember that 83% of valid complaints are responded to at Stage One and at Stage One 80.6% of complaints are responded to on time.
- (f) The proportion of Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Two - Escalated closed complaints that were granted an extension for SBC was below the proportion for the Family Group and Scotland for all stages with the exception of the Family Group for Stage Two - Escalated.

4.6 If, after fully investigating a complaint, an individual is still dissatisfied with the decision or the way in which their complaint has been handled, the customer can ask the SPSO to look at the complaint. In 2021/22 the SPSO received 25 complaints about Scottish Borders Council. This is equal to 2.1% of all complaints received by the SPSO in relation to the Local Authority sector. Of the 21 complaints closed by the SPSO about SBC in 2021/22, 2 complaints were considered but only 1 was upheld or partially upheld. Details of the 2 complaints considered are presented at Section 3 of Appendix 1.

- 4.7 The new complaint recording system was implemented in October 2022. There were two parts to this project. The first was building a completely new and improved complaints recording system. The other part was a complete refresh of the complaint handling training. The refresh of the complaint handling training will ensure that all complaint handlers across the council are aware of their responsibilities with regards to complaint handling. There have been some changes to these responsibilities as a result of the SPSO launching their revised Model Complaints Handling Procedure in April 2022.
- 4.8 It is expected that this complete refresh of system and training will make a significant difference in the long run to SBC's complaint handling performance. Changes in the new system and training that will support this are:
- (a) The new system provides transparency to managers so they are aware of what complaints have been made about their services, and what stage these complaints are at.
  - (b) Improved ownership of complaints is expected because complaint handlers are responsible for progressing their complaints.
  - (c) The system has automated notifications to remind officers that they have outstanding responses.
  - (d) The refreshed training has been made mandatory for all staff who have been identified as having responsibility for complaint handling.
- 4.9 It is, however, important to note that in the short term there may be a decrease in performance as officers become accustomed to using a very different system and they learn the requirements of a new approach to complaints handling.
- 4.10 It is anticipated that the 2022/23 report will be brought to the Executive Committee by the end of September 2023. Whilst SBC annual figures are usually available earlier than this, the report is delayed because the Family Group and Scottish Average benchmarking data is not available before this.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

- (a) By following efficient and robust complaints handling procedures, reputational damage can be significantly reduced. Analysis of complaints can be useful in identifying or highlighting risks that SBC may not be aware of. This enables SBC to mitigate these risks and reduce the impact or likelihood of them occurring and of impacting on the quality of services delivered.
- (b) Internal Audit assurance work was undertaken during 2017 in relation to complaints and was designed to improve internal control and governance arrangements, specifically as a contribution to the Council's corporate management of risk. Implementation of the agreed Internal Audit recommendations arising from this work are designed to improve consistency in complaint handling practices across the Council and to demonstrate learning from complaints. The new complaints recording system has now been implemented, and addresses all the Internal Audit recommendations.

### **5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

There are no direct economic, social or environmental issues with this report which would affect the Council's sustainability policy.

### **5.5 Climate Change**

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to a new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

### **5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes to the Scheme of Administration or Delegation are required as a result of this report.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council, Corporate Communications, Development and Support Manager and Customer Services Manager have been consulted and all comments received incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

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Jenni Craig

**Title**

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**Background Papers:****Previous Minute Reference:**

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. The Customer Advice and Support Service can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Customer Advice and Support Service, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA Tel: 01835 824000. Email: [CustomerAdvice@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:CustomerAdvice@scotborders.gov.uk)

# **Scottish Borders Council Annual Complaint Performance Report 2021/22**

## Contents

1.	Overview	Page 2
1.1	Introduction	Page 2
1.2	Corporate Complaints Procedure	Page 2
2.	Complaint Performance Statistics	Page 3
2.1	Indicator 1: Complaints closed per 1,000 population	Page 3
2.2	Indicator 2: Closed complaints	Page 3
2.3	Indicator 3: Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld	Page 4
2.4	Indicator 4: Average times	Page 5
2.5	Indicator 5: Performance against timescales	Page 6
2.6	Indicator 6: Number of cases where an extension is authorized	Page 6
2.7	Indicator 7: Customer satisfaction	Page 6
2.8	Indicator 8: Learning from complaints	Page 9
3.	SPSO Learning and Improvement 2020/21	Page 11
4.	Complaint Summary	Page 13

# 1. Overview

## 1.1. Introduction

This is the council’s annual complaints performance report that provides information on customer complaints received between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

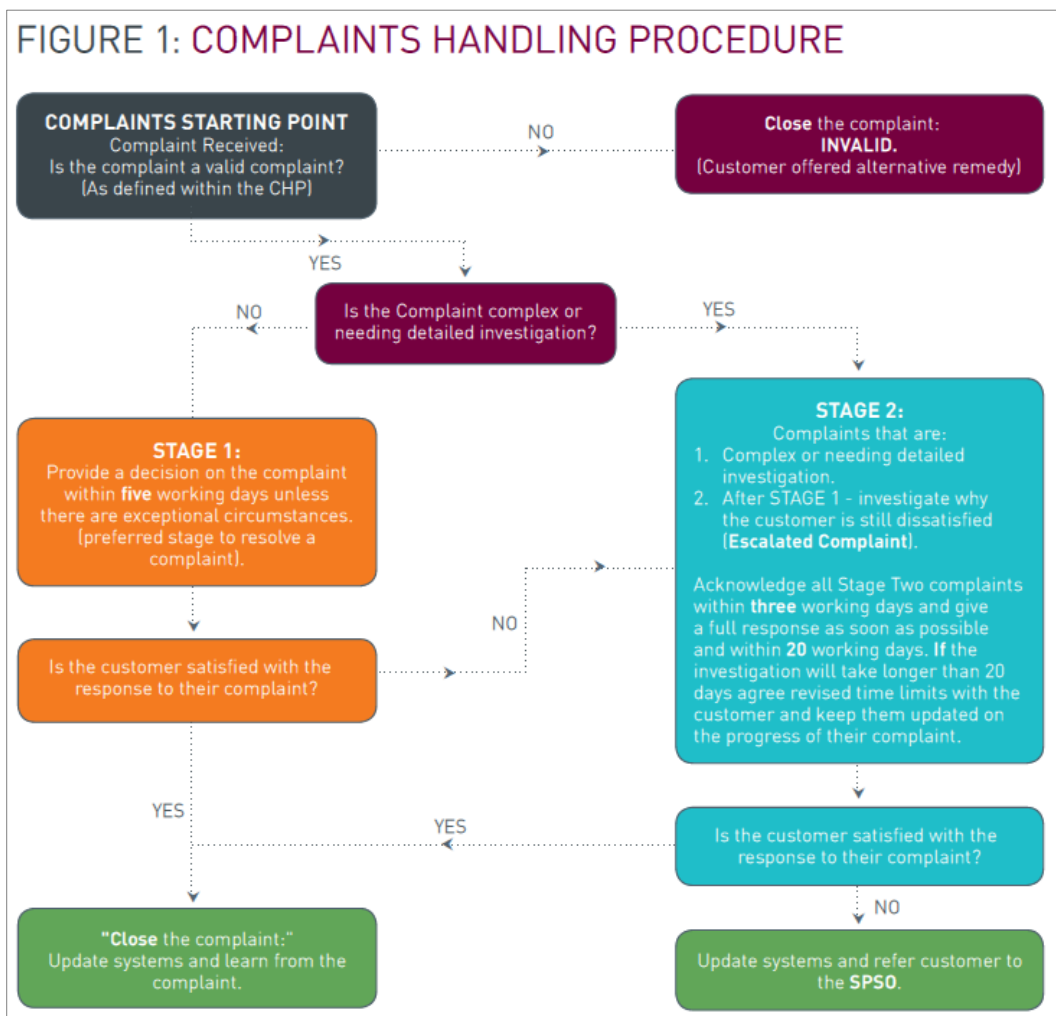
Scottish Borders Council always aims to provide the highest possible quality of service to the residents, business owners and service users within the Scottish Borders. However, there are times when things go wrong and we fail to meet the expectations of our customers.

The council’s complaints procedure provides a clear and structured way to provide feedback on what has gone wrong with a council service. The process to resolution should be straightforward and timely. Listening to our customers helps us to put things right, improve our services and learn from our mistakes.

This report provides us with an opportunity to share how well we are performing.

## 1.2. Corporate Complaints Procedure

The objective of the Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) is to resolve customer dissatisfaction as close to the point of service delivery and as soon as possible at Stage One in the procedure. Figure 1 is a flow chart of SBC’s CHP. Complaints can be raised online, by email, in person, by telephone or by letter.



Complaints performance is reported on a quarterly basis to both the council’s Senior Leadership Team and the council’s Executive Committee. All complaints performance statistics are reported to the public and are available on the council’s website.

## 2. Complaint Performance Statistics

This report presents how SBC performs based on eight key performance indicators developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in conjunction with all 32 Scottish Local Authorities.

The number of complaints closed in 2021-22 was 849. This is an increase on the number closed in the previous year. The council will continue to analyse complaints to help inform service improvement, identify training opportunities for our staff and to help prioritise our activities to meet the changing needs of the residents of the Scottish Borders.

Complaint benchmark data for 2021-22 is accurate at the time of publishing this report. Where applicable, this report has included the Scottish local authority national average and Family Group performance indicators for comparative information. The council’s performance relating to the processing of complaints performs well against the Scottish national averages in many indicators, but performance is poorer in relation to indicators that measure timeliness of responses.

### 2.1. Indicator 1: Complaints closed per 1,000 population

This indicator records the total number of ‘Valid’ complaints received by SBC during the financial year (April to March) as a rate per 1,000 population. In 2021-22 SBC received **1257** complaints of which **386** were closed as ‘Invalid’. The remaining **849** were handled as ‘Valid’ complaints. This is equivalent to 7.4 received complaints per 1,000 population.

Table 1 provides SBC’s total complaints closed per 1,000 population over the past 5 years along with the Scottish and Family Group Averages for 2021-22. The table shows that there has been an increase in the number of complaints closed by SBC and the complaints closed per 1,000 population in 2021-22.

**Table 1: Complaints closed per 1,000 population**

Measure	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Population Total	114,530	115,020	115,270	115,510	115,240	916,940	5,292,350
Total number of Valid complaints	670	625	725	780	849	5,651	57,015
Number of complaints per 1,000	5.8	5.4	6.3	6.8	7.4	6.2	10.4

### 2.2. Indicator 2: Closed complaints

This indicator provides information on the number of complaints closed at Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Two – Escalated complaints as a percentage of all complaints closed. Table 2 provides the performance information for this indicator.

The term ‘closed’ refers to a complaint that has had a response sent to the customer and at the time, no further action was required to respond to the customer.



Stage Two - Escalated complaints are those complaints that have been resolved at Stage One initially, but the customer was not satisfied with the response they received. When the customer requests that the same issue is considered again at Stage Two, of the CHP, these complaints are called 'Stage Two - Escalated' complaints.

**Table 2: Closed Complaints**

Complaints Closed as a % of all complaints closed	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Stage One	75%	78%	75%	85.4%	83.0%	74.4%	88.6%
Stage Two	21%	17%	21%	12.2%	13.6%	19.0%	7.5%
Stage Two - Escalated	4%	4%	5%	2.4%	3.4%	6.3%	3.8%

### 2.3. Indicator 3: Complaints upheld and not upheld

There is a requirement for a formal outcome to be recorded for each complaint. SBC made the decision not to use a 'Partially Upheld' outcome when the CHP was introduced in 2013. Therefore, for the purposes of this reporting, complaints are recorded as either 'Upheld' or 'Not Upheld'

This indicator measures the percentage of complaints, which were upheld or not upheld, recorded at each stage. The results can be seen in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3: Upheld Complaints**

Complaints upheld	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Stage One	42%	37%	48%	36.6%	50.5%	38.7%	55.1%
Stage Two	38%	45%	47%	38.5%	37.4%	35.5%	38.9%
Stage Two - Escalated	50%	39%	30%	22.2%	44.8%	42.5%	45.6%

It should be noted that in Table 3 above, the 'Upheld' and 'Partially Upheld' outcomes for the Family Group and Scottish Average have been added together, to allow meaningful comparison with SBC's figures.

**Table 4: Not Upheld Complaints**

Complaints not upheld	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Stage One	58%	63%	52%	63.4%	49.5%	44.7%	42.5%
Stage Two	62%	55%	53%	61.5%	62.6%	70.9%	70.4%
Stage Two - Escalated	50%	61%	70%	77.8%	55.2%	60.4%	67.7%

## 2.4. Indicator 4: Average times

Indicator 4 represents the average time in working days to close complaints. Indicator 4 performance can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5: Average times**

Average times	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Stage One	4.0	4.6	5.3	5.9	7.1	6.4	6.3
Stage Two	17.7	18.2	22.5	23.1	30.5	22.3	20.7
Stage Two - Escalated	18.0	14.9	32.4	41.6	42.2	27.6	18.6

The average time taken to close complaints at Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Two - Escalated continues to worsen. Both the Stage Two and the Stage Two - Escalated complaints figures are particularly poor in 2021/22. For the second year in a row Stage Two – Escalated complaints are taking more than twice the allowed 20 working days. Comparison with the Family Group and Scottish Averages shows that this increasing length of time to close complaints is a national picture, and with the exception of the Scottish Average for Stage Two - Escalated complaints.

## 2.5. Indicator 5: Performance against timescales

This indicator reports the percentage of complaints at each stage that were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days. These include cases where an extension to the timescale has been authorised. Indicator 5 performance can be seen in Table 6.

**Table 6: Performance against timescales**

Performance against timescales	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Stage One	86%	81%	77%	80%	80.6%	72.4%	67.1%
Stage Two	67%	74%	60%	66%	49.6%	61.2%	63.4%
Stage Two - Escalated	54%	79%	24%	22%	27.6%	48.0%	61.6%

## 2.6. Indicator 6: Number of cases where an extension is authorised

SBC always aims to respond to complaints as quickly as possible. There are, however, times when a complaint is particularly complex and it is not feasible to fully investigate the issues within the prescribed timescales. In these situations SBC agree with a complainant to extend the timescale for closing the complaint.

This indicator reports the percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the 5 or 20 working day timeline has been authorised. Indicator 6 performance can be seen in Table 7.

**Table 7: Number of cases where an extension is authorised**

Percentage of cases where an extension is authorised	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	FG 1 Average 2021-22	Scottish Average 2021-22
Stage One	4%	3%	2%	1%	1.3%	14.7%	6.2%
Stage Two	18%	11%	5%	3%	8.7%	25.0%	18.8%
Stage Two - Escalated	31%	4%	6%	6%	10.3%	8.7%	17.8%

## 2.7. Indicator 7: Customer Satisfaction

SBC runs a Complaint Handling Customer Satisfaction Survey on an ongoing basis. Customers are contacted approximately one week after their complaint is closed inviting them to provide feedback on their experience. Indicator 7 performance can be seen in Table 8. This indicator provides information on the levels of customer satisfaction with the complaint handling procedure and process.

The survey asks the customer to state how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with:

- Information about the complaints procedure being easy to access
- How easy they found it to make their complaint
- If they were happy that the Investigating Officer fully understood their complaint
- They were given the opportunity to fully explain their complaint
- That the points of their complaint were identified and responded to
- The response to their complaint was easy to understand
- Overall how satisfied they were with the handling of their complaint

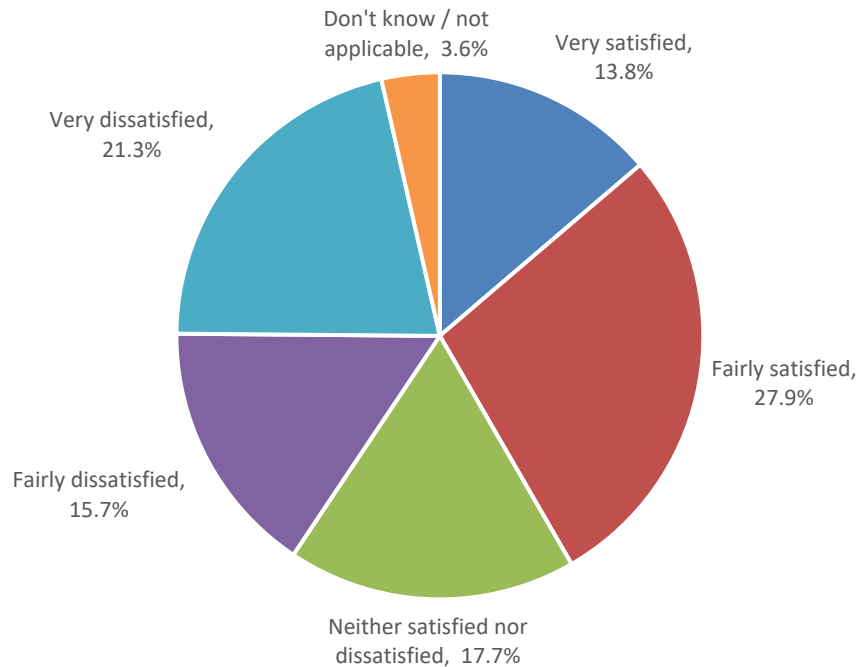
They were also asked:

- If they were told if the response was going to take longer than the set timescales (five working days at stage 1 and 20 working days at stage 2)
- If they were clearly told what the next stage of the complaints process was for them

**Table 8: Customer Satisfaction**

<b>Survey Invitations Sent:</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
No. survey Invitations Sent	225	131	57	166	488
No. closed complaints	691	645	725	780	849
% of customers invited to respond to the survey	33%	20%	8%	21%	58%
<b>Return Rate:</b>					
No. Returned	25	33	25	41	84
% Return Rate	11%	25%	44%	25%	17%
<b>Responses:</b>					
Either Fairly or Very Satisfied	60%	49%	43%	58%	42%
Either Fairly or Very Dissatisfied	20%	30%	38%	23%	37%

**Figure 2 Overall Complaints Handling  
Customer Satisfaction 2021/22**



In 2021/22, approximately 58% of customers who made a complaint were invited to respond to a survey about their satisfaction with SBC’s handling of their complaint. The survey return rate has dropped from 25% in 2020-21 to 17% in 2021-22. In 2021/22, satisfaction with complaints handling has dropped and returned to pre Covid levels seen in 2019/20.

In addition to recording complaints, SBC also records compliments. These compliments are submitted by customers online, or are received by Customer Advice and Support Services officers over the phone on the 0300 number or in emails sent to the enquiry mailbox. It should be noted that SBC also receives compliments directly to officers but these are not always recorded, and therefore cannot be included in these figures.

In 2021/22, the Council recorded approximately 112 unsolicited comments and compliments for the services provided. This was a decrease from 192 in 2020/21. Of these 68 were compliments. These compliments related to areas such as kerb-side waste and recycling, roads, community recycling centers, health and social care and customer services. Some examples of these compliments are as follows:

*“I have just walked the St Cuthbert Way from Melrose to the Holy Island and enjoyed every minute of my time in your area. To my delight the route was very well signed and maintained. There was no litter at all and the villages and towns we passed all looked neat and well maintained. Please pass my thanks to those responsible for the maintenance of the route. I might add that I have recently walked long distance footpaths in Wales and England, and they are not as well maintained as St Cuthbert’s Way”.*

*“I wish to compliment the Parks Dept. and SBC, on the floral display at Bank Street Gardens Galashiels. It is absolutely outstanding. I had to take a few photos. Thank you so much”.*

## ANNUAL COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE REPORT | 2021-22

*"Just wanted to say thank you for the free overnight parking in your town. So nice for those of us with campervans to actually feel wanted in the places we visit. Will be visiting again soon!"*

*"I just wanted to say a massive thank you for the extremely efficient support the Ask Sara team gave my parents this week. It has improved the way my Dad is able to get about the house, and we only started the process this week! The lady who called my mum initially was lovely and helpful, and even picked up on things to talk to the doctor about. Then, 5 days on and they have grab rails and extra banisters fitted. It's just amazing, thank you so much from us all".*

*"I am moving to Dundee but I wanted to say a big thank you to all at Borders Council. I think you do a great job on your phone lines, rubbish uplift and care of the people and area. I don't think I'll find better. Well done".*

*"Please pass on my thanks to X who works at the Selkirk Recycling Centre at weekends. X has been absolutely magnificent to me and my family. We've made a few visits over the last few weeks. X is always so friendly to my children, encouraging them to recycle. It's just wonderful! X is always smiling and always helpful. For example, I dropped some polystyrene on my way to the general waste container and X was straight over with a brush to help and sweep it up. X is kind, conscientious and just fantastic. Please pass on our thanks to X".*

*"Thank you for providing such an easy to use and painless service. The slick way my blue badge was renewed is impressive, particularly so in view of the present health crisis".*

*"I wanted to extend my thanks to the Council's bulky collection service. I had ordered a collection for some large items. I was working late the night before and forgot to put the items on the curbside for collection! When I heard the van outside the next morning I rushed down to apologise and ask them to hold on for a few minutes but to my surprise they had collected them from my back garden for me. They were not obligated to do that, but it meant great deal. I wanted to take the time to thank them for going the extra mile and wish I had managed to thank them in person on the day. Little kindnesses like this one really do have a positive impact. Keep up the good work, you are appreciated!"*

*"I live in Kinross and have been dealing with my late uncle's estate. I have been in contact with many companies and organisations over the last few months and wanted to say that SBC has been far and away the most pleasant organisation to deal with. I have always got through right away and the folk I have spoken to have been efficient, friendly and knowledgeable. I want to pass on my comments as I really appreciate the service I have received".*

*"Thank you to the roads department for filling in the holes in Darnick so quickly after I had reported them. They were the worst potholes I have ever seen but equally I have never seen such a quick response before. Well done".*

*"My partner and I recently made a planning application with the assistance of X and his team at the Scottish Borders Planning office. I just wanted to convey our gratitude for all of X's assistance in helping us navigate the process and commend him for his patience and the quality of service that he consistently delivered".*

*"Just some feedback to say, your Cycling Eyemouth local trails online map and guide is excellent. I've followed the routes, they're well thought out, and well-marked on the road".*

*"I'd like to shout out to the team working at Galashiels recycling today. They're all really helpful and friendly and not just today - consistently excellent service. Thanks".*

## 2.8. Indicator 8: Learning from Complaints

Formal complaint reports are provided to the Corporate Management Team on a monthly basis and complaints performance information is provided to Elected Members on a quarterly basis through our Corporate Public Performance Report.

We take all complaints seriously, and the information gathered from them is invaluable in helping to continually improve our services. Since the introduction of the Complaints Handling Procedure, many changes and improvements have been made to services as a result of complaints and some examples of case studies are detailed in this section.

### Case Study One

Customer A contacted us to complain that their recycling bin was not collected. The collection crew left a label on the bin saying what could and what couldn't go into the bin. The label did not explain why the bin was not collected and Customer A had to try work this out from themselves.

As a result of Customer A's complaint all collection crews have been reminded that when a bin is not collected a notification must be left with the bin explaining why it has not been collected.

### Case Study Two

Customer B's partner passed away in October 2020. At that time we wrote to customer B asking that their partners Blue Badge was returned to us. Six months later council officers knocked on Customer B's door to discuss painting a disabled parking bay on the street outside Customer B's home. Understandably Customer B was extremely upset and contacted us to complain about the lack of internal communication and the upset this had caused them.

As a result of Customer B's complaint data sharing arrangements have been put in place, so that where appropriate the road safety team are notified if a customer with a Blue Badge and a disabled parking bay passes away.

### Case Study Three

Customer C contacted us to complain about the wording of an email acknowledgement he had received in response to applying to vote by post. The language used was professional language which the customer felt was not user-friendly and is not what people expect from public sector organisations any more. Customer C made some suggestions on how things could be re-worded but officers failed to acknowledge them.

As a result of Customer C's complaint a review of the communications will take place in conjunction with colleagues across Scotland.

### Case Study Four

A number of customers made complaints that they had seen council officers using pesticide or weed killer in one of the parks in the Borders. They were concerned about the impact these chemicals have on the environment, on bees and other pollinating insects.

We responded assuring customers that only products which are licenced for use, and compliant with the licencing requirements, observing appropriate protocols in terms of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations are used. In addition weed killing operations are regularly reviewed.

We are also currently in discussions with other Local Authorities about a series of trials being undertaken that consider alternative approaches. The results of these trials will continue to be monitored.

**Case Study Five**

Customer D forgot to cancel a standing order once they'd set up a direct debit to pay their council tax. This resulted in an overpayment. Customer D contacted us to request the overpayment be refunded. On the call it came to light that there had been other overpayments. As the amount was over a particular threshold, a senior manager would need to authorise the payment.

Unfortunately, the officer handling this transaction forgot to make the senior managers aware that there was a refund to be authorised. Customer D raised a complaint when the refund did not appear in their bank account on the day they were told it would.

All officers in the team were made aware of the impact this omission had on Customer D and they were reminded that senior managers must be made aware when a refund above a certain level requires authorisation.



### 3. SPSO LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

Customers can ask the SPSO to look at their complaint once we've fully investigated, if they're still not satisfied with our decision or the way we handled the complaint.

In 2021/22, the SPSO received 25 and closed 21 complaints about SBC. This is equal to 2.1% of all complaints received by the SPSO in relation to the Local Authority sector, or 1.9% of all complaints closed by the SPSO in relation to the Local Authority sector. The numbers of complaints that go to the SPSO are a very small proportion of all the complaints made about Scottish Local Authorities; this is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 1: Illustration of SPSO complaints of all complaints for 2021/22**

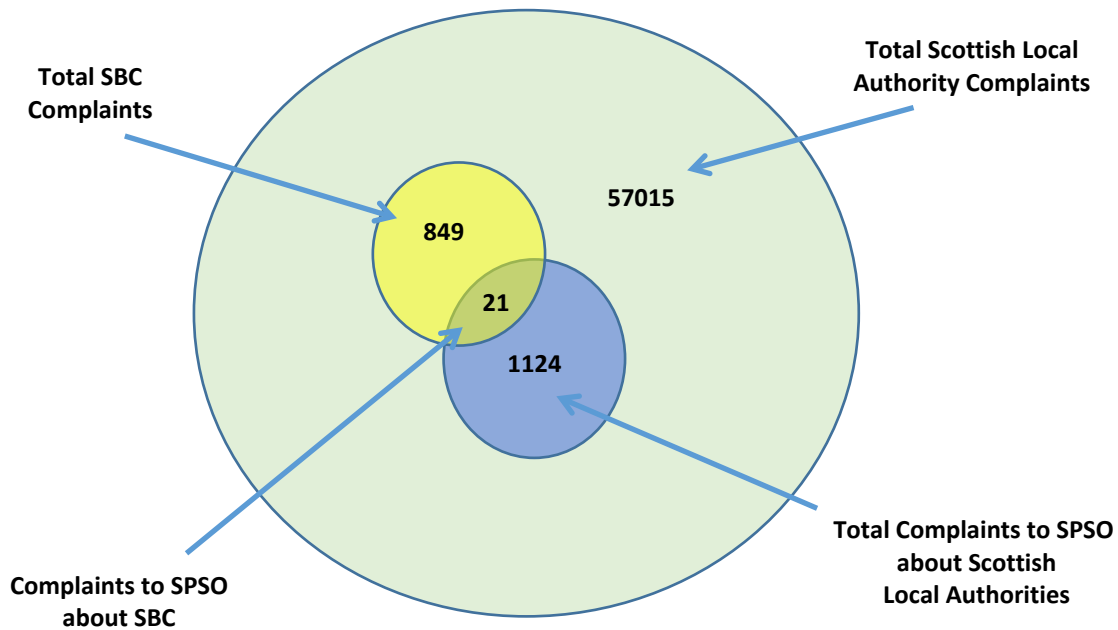


Table 9 below shows the number of complaints about SBC received by the SPSO and this as a percentage of the Local Authority Sector

**Table 9: SPSO Complaints Received by Year**

SPSO Received Complaints /Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
SPSO Received Complaints about SBC	33	20	27	11	41	15	25
SBC Complaints as % all for Scottish Local Authority sector	1.9%	1.3%	1.8%	0.8%	3.3%	1.6%	2.1%

Table 10 below shows how SBC compares to the Scottish Local Authority Sector in relation to complaints closed by the SPSO.

**Table 10: SPSO Closed Complaints for SBC / Year**

SPSO Closed Complaints for SBC / Year	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22		
	SBC Count	SBC %	Sector %	SBC Count	SBC %	Sector %	SBC Count	SBC %	Sector %
<b>Closed</b>	38	3.0%	2.2%	17	1.8%	1.7%	21	1.9%	2.0%
<b>Stage SPSO Complaint Closed</b>									
Advice	12	2.4%	39%	6	1.6%	40%	10	2.3%	39.1%
Early Resolution	25	3.7%	54%	10	2.0%	53%	9	1.4%	57.5%
Investigation	1	1.2%	7%	1	1.6%	7%	2	5.3%	3.4%
Premature	5	1.9%	21%	2	0.8%	27%	8	2.7%	26.3%
<b>SPSO Decision</b>									
Fit for SPSO	1	1.2%	7%	1	1.6%	7%	2	5.3%	3.4%
<b>Upheld / Partially Upheld</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>

In 2021/22, the SPSO undertook two investigations into complaints about SBC. The published Case Studies for these complaints are detailed below. Case Study One was not upheld and SBC did not receive any recommendations, but Case Study Two was upheld and there were five recommendations.

#### **Case Study One:**

C complained that the council failed to provide kinship care allowance after they had moved into the area from England, despite them having custody of their grandchild through a Residence Order (a court order which determines where a child should live) from an English court. The council had refused on the basis that they considered the English council should be responsible for the cost of the allowance, unless and until the Residence Order was confirmed by a Scottish court. C was also concerned that the council had failed to provide appropriate support to them and their grandchild.

The SPSO took independent advice from a Social Worker. We found that, apart from a delay of a couple of months when C first applied for assistance, the council had acted appropriately, and that the order in question was not one that was transferrable between England and Scotland. As such, the SPSO did not uphold C's complaints.

#### **Case Study Two:**

C complained about the council's social work involvement with their child (A). A had a range of conditions that affected their development and behaviour. A was placed in residential care and was made subject to a legal order via the children's hearing system.

A was transitioning out of children's services and into adult services. C raised a number of concerns with the council about the support provided by the council when arranging A's transition. Whilst the council upheld aspects of C's complaint, C remained dissatisfied with the council's response and brought their complaint to us.

C felt that some aspects of the council's response were unclear, that they had not taken responsibility for what had gone wrong, and that they misunderstood some of the family's concerns.

The SPSO took independent advice from a Social Worker. They found that the council could have done more to facilitate clear communication with C and to involve C in A's care planning and assessments. The SPSO also found that the council unreasonably excluded C from certain aspects of the decision-making process for A. The SPSO upheld all of C's complaints.

### **Recommendations**

The SPSO asked the council to do the following in this case:

- Apologise to C for the failings identified. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at: [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets).

What The SPSO said should change to put things right in future:

- Social Work staff should allow enough time to carry out the appropriate planning and assessment work, consider if a capacity assessment should be sought at an early stage, and take a holistic view of the needs of the young person and their wider support networks.
- Social Work staff should take into account the young person's wishes about their family's involvement in the decision-making process. Social work staff should meet with families to discuss and address any issues prior to children's hearing/review meetings and try to agree a course of action to present to the Children's Panel/review officer.
- Social Work staff should endeavour to use emails to contact clients/their families, when that is their preference, as it is more effective and efficient than corresponding by post. Unless there is good reason not to, Social Work staff should arrange a face-to-face meeting or a phone call to discuss sensitive matters, rather than communicating the information in writing.

The SPSO have asked the council to provide them with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations made on this case by the deadline set.

## 4. 2021/22 Complaint Summary

In 2021/22, the council closed 849 valid complaints and this represents an increase of 69 from the 2020/21 figure of 780.

83% of all complaints closed by the council were resolved at Stage One (Frontline Resolution), 13.6% of complaints resolved at Stage Two (Investigation) with the remaining 3.4% of complaints being resolved at Stage Two – Escalated.

The average times taken by the council to resolve Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Two – Escalated complaints were 7.1 days, 30.5 days and 42.2 days respectively. The council's overall performance relating to the timeliness of processing complaints has decreased for all stages, but especially for Stage Two complaints. Of the 115 Stage Two complaints, only 57 were answered on time. That said, the council's performance in closing complaints on time at Stage One is better than the Family Group and the Scottish Averages and accounts for 83% of all the complaints submitted. SBC's performance at Stage Two and Stage Two - Escalated complaints is worse than the Family Group and Scottish Averages.

80.6% of Stage One complaints were resolved within 5 days and 49.6% of Stage Two complaints were resolved within 20 days, which is a drop of just over 16% when compared to 2020/21. The percentages in 2020/21 were 80% and 66% respectively. However, 27.6% of Stage Two - Escalated complaints were resolved within 20 working days compared to 22% in 2020/21. The Scottish National Average for 2021-22 is 67.1% and 63.4% for Stage One and Stage Two resolution respectively. SBC's performance at Stage One in relation to the Scottish and Family Group averages is positive. The Scottish National Average for 2020-21 for Stage Two - Escalated complaints is 61.6%.

The percentage of Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Two - Escalated complaints that were upheld in 2021/22 were 50.5%, 37.4% and 44.8% respectively. The council's performance in relation to this measure outperformed the Scottish National Averages for 2021/22 that were 55.1%, 38.9% and 45.6%.

In 2021/22, the number of surveys issued increased significantly compared to 2020/21. We achieved a return rate of 17%, which was down from 25% in 2020/21. The percentage of customers either fairly or very satisfied has also reduced with 42% either fairly or very satisfied. We continue to have more customers say they are fairly satisfied with the handling of their complaint than any of the other categories. See Figure 2.

In 2021/22, the Council also received approximately 112 unsolicited comments and compliments for the services provided. This was a decrease from 192 in 2020/21. Of these 68 were compliments. These compliments related to areas such as kerb-side waste and recycling, roads, community recycling centers, health and social care and customer services.

Overall, there has been an increase in the number of complaints closed in 2021/22 when compared to the previous year. In 2021/20, for the first time we have more Stage One complaints that were upheld compared to those not upheld. For Stage Two and Stage Two – Escalated we continue to have more complaints that are not upheld than are upheld. The council's performance relating to the processing of complaints performs well against the Scottish National averages in many indicators, but performance is poorer in relation to indicators that measure timeliness of responses. Work is currently being undertaken to pursue overdue complaints more vigorously, which will hopefully have a positive impact on the indicators in 2022/23.

## 5. Live Borders Complaints

Live Borders has a Complaints Handling Procedure that aligns with SBC's and the SPSO's Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP). The Volume of all complaints, comments and compliments for 2021/22 are presented below as well as overall figures for 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 for comparison. Figures for 2020/21 are missing due to service closures for much of the year as a result of Covid.

Complaints 2021/22	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2021/22	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Price	0	1	0	6	7	4	8	14	16
Booking/access/info	1	14	7	10	32	61	87	55	78
Quality	0	4	5	8	17	45	47	47	27
Staff attitude	1	1	1	2	5	9	19	11	4
Other	2	9	7	6	24	37	21	47	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>133</b>
Comments	0	0	0	0	0	31	72	87	64
Compliments	0	4	4	6	14	25	12	21	8

The number of complaints recorded has decreased since 2019/20 by 45%. The number of comments and compliments is lower than in prior years, see Channel below.

### Channel:

90% of our complaints in 2021/22 were received electronically, the majority of these were received by email. In the past it has been a fairly equal division between email and online. During lockdown in the prior year the 3Cs portal became disconnected, this was reinstated in quarter three 2021/22. The majority of complaints this year (73%) were received by email.

### Price:

The number of complaints concerning price (8%) continues to indicate that our price point is right for the Borders

### Booking / access/ information:

The majority of the complaints, 37% in the year, relate to booking /access and information, with a spike in quarter 2 when we restarted services. Booking was essential for a number of our activities as we restarted our services, this was to ensure Covid compliance including the management of number of attendees per session. We recognised some customer difficulties and responded by providing additional information and enhanced the "how to" guides on our website. We also made an amendment to our system configuration in August to address issues with booking family swims, and other group bookings.

### Staff Attitude:

There has been some learning from complaints concerning staff attitude, the roll out of World Host training has been superseded by a bespoke programme of customer services excellence training which was put in place in quarter 4 of 2021/22 and continues into 2022/23 to support staff. These awareness and training programmes have had a positive impact on complaints concerning staff attitude.

### Quality:

The number of complaints concerning quality has fallen from 29% in 2019/20 to 20% in 2021/22. Only half of these were upheld and of these 40% received customer satisfaction for the way they were handled.

**Customer Satisfaction:**

We have 21 records of customer satisfaction with complaints handling and resolution reasons include:

- Proactive actions and proposals going forward
- Being kept informed
- Appreciation of follow up
- Speed, result and explanation

Quarter by Quarter analysis	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total 2021/22
<b>Total received</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Received online</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>% received online</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>17.6%</b>
<b>Closed complaints</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Closed at stage 1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Closed at stage 2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Stage Two - Escalated and closed</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Upheld</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Upheld at Stage 1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Upheld at Stage 2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Stage Two - Escalated and Upheld</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Closed within authorised timescale</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Closed at stage 1 within 5 working days</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Closed at stage 2 within 20 working days</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Stage Two - Escalated and closed within 20 working days</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>% closed within time scale</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>86.2%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96.9%</b>	<b>92.9%</b>

## 5.1 Live Borders Learning from Complaints

### Facility Closures:

We need to improve our communications when having to execute quick facility closures, these last minute closures are in the main due to Covid causing staff unavailability.

### Engagement:

We continue to use the CHP as a means to engage positively with our customers, to demonstrate that we listen and follow through when a complaint is received.

Thank you for taking the time to write back to me. As I said, my experience with Live Borders staff was positive, but there were definitely issues with the booking, which I'm pleased to hear you address. I'm happy to accept your apology and appreciate you getting in touch.

Thank you, I really appreciate the action you've taken. And so swiftly too. I am still dubious on the date of birth bit, but I understand the reasoning. Personally, I'm all about making sure people feel included. It doesn't affect me directly, but I work with people whom it does affect.

Again, I very much appreciate your responsiveness.

## 5.2 2021/22 Comments & Compliments

Compliments are shared with our staff or the facility concerned, and the upward management structure. Compliments in the main are about our staff, their friendliness, helpfulness and knowledge. We are proud of our people.

Examples include:

“Thank you for your prompt response. I would also like to take this chance to praise your staff at the pool who have been fantastic during the last 2 very difficult years!”

“I went back to Eyemouth swimming pool today and had a lovely experience. The music was gentle background sound and the pool nice and warm. The staff, X particularly was very welcoming”.

“Thank you all very much for all the hard work in such difficult times. Appreciate being able to swim at Eyemouth again”.

“Not only is the museum a fantastic tribute to a racing legend, the customer service afforded by your staff is similarly to be commended and although we did say to X as we left how much we had enjoyed the museum and admired his patience both with an obstreperous customer and with difficult technology, we felt we should make sure that someone higher up the line should be aware.”

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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S QUARTER 3 2022/23 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

**Director - People, Performance & Change**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**14 March 2023**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of Scottish Borders Council's Quarter 3 2022/23 performance information.**
- 1.2 The information contained within this report will be made available on the SBC website: [www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/performance)

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-**

- (a) Notes the Quarter 3 2022/23 Council Plan Performance Milestones and Performance Indicators Report in Appendix 1.**
- (b) Notes the Quarter 3 2022/23 Community Action Team Performance Report in Appendix 2.**

### **3 BACKGROUND TO SBC PERFORMANCE REPORTING 2022/23**

#### **Council Plan Performance Milestones and Performance Indicators Report**

- 3.1 The Q3 Council Plan Performance Milestones and Performance Indicators Report shows progress made against the 2022/23 Council Plan milestones and performance indicators for quarter 3. The report is shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Work continues on developing a new suite of performance indicators for 2023/24 which reflect the revised Council Plan.
- 3.3 Work continues to explore how we can present indicator trends in a simple and easy to use interactive format on the Council website.

#### **Community Action Team Performance Report**

- 3.4 The Community Action Team Performance Report has been updated to reflect Quarter 3 2022/23. It is shown in Appendix 2.

### **4 COUNCIL PLAN – SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE**

- 3.5 Progress against the milestones this quarter has been predominately positive. Of the 13 milestones, 10 of them are showing positive progress and work continues on progressing a number of the long-term workstreams.
- 3.6 There were three milestones where activity has not progressed as expected:
  - The introduction of Parent Portal to improve Digital Customer Access was not progressed as it was not going to realise the benefits to SBC that had been hoped.
  - A programme of curriculum reform incorporating National and International recommendations is now being included in next Council Plan due to an extension in the consultation period by the Scottish Government.
  - Developing a Council Commissioning Framework has moved to Quarter 4 due to the recruitment into the relevant post.

### **5 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 5.1 Of the 96 indicators presented 52 are progressing as expected and do not show grounds for concern. 17 are considered to be showing positive progress, and 14 are highlighted as areas of focus for improvement. Four are provided for information only, and there is a delay in receiving the latest information for 9 of them.

## **6 COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM – SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY AND IMPACT**

6.1 An infographic summary on the impact of the Community Action Team (CAT) is provided at Appendix 2.

During Q3 of 2022/23 the CAT has:

- Carried out 104 hours of foot patrols, 1034 hours of mobile patrols, and 71 static road checks;
- Issued 80 parking tickets and 20 Anti-Social Behaviour warning letters to under 18s;
- Carried out 15 Person Drug searches (40% positive) and 17 Premises Drug searches (88% positive).

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

Effective performance management arrangements will ensure that services, and those providing services on behalf of SBC, are aware of any weaknesses and can take corrective action in a timely manner, therefore mitigating any risks more effectively. The Council's Risk Management Policy and framework ensures that all services, and services delivered by third parties, identify and manage risks to the achievement of their objectives, with senior management providing appropriate levels of oversight. Performance should be enhanced by having robust risk management arrangements in place.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no adverse equality/diversity implications. Performance reporting may help the Council to identify and address any equality / diversity issues and improve processes and procedures.

### **7.4 Sustainable Development Goals**

Economic, social and environmental impact of SBC actions can be monitored more effectively if there are effective performance reporting arrangements in place.

### **7.5 Climate Change**

There are no significant Climate Change effects arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **7.6 Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result, rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

## 7.7 Data Protection Impact Assessment

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

## 7.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

## 8 CONSULTATION

8.1 The Acting Chief Financial Officer, the Interim Chief Officer Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director – People, Performance & Change, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received incorporated into the final report.

8.2 The Council Management Team have been consulted on this report and any comments received incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Clair Hepburn**  
**Director - People, Performance & Change**

### Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Julie Aitchison	Business Services Officer Tel: 01835 824000 Ext 8147

### Background Papers:

**Previous Minute Reference:** 6 December 2022

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. You can also be given information on other language translations as well as the provision of additional copies.

Contact us at Policy, Planning & Performance, Scottish Borders Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, [performance@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:performance@scotborders.gov.uk)



SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

# PERFORMANCE REPORT

## Q3-2022/23 MILESTONES & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Page 85



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant communities



Good health and wellbeing



Working together improving lives

# Introduction



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy,  
transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant  
communities



Good health and  
wellbeing



Working together  
improving lives

This is the Quarter 3 Performance Report for the 2022/23 Council Plan. It presents the Council's progress against the Key Milestones set out for Quarter 3 and provides an update on the Council's Performance Indicators. The report is structured into the 6 themes of the Council Plan.

For each theme the progress against key milestones is shown alongside the desired outcome or outcomes that it is contributing towards. Detail is then provided on the theme's performance indicators that are noted as being particularly positive, or areas of focus for improvement. All performance indicators are then summarised in a table, with the progress of each indicator identified as either positive, neutral, focus for improvement or for information only.

Indicators showing a **notable improvement**, or where the performance indicates a particularly **positive** position are shown in charts coloured in **green**

Indicators showing a notable **reduction** in performance, or where there is a **focus for improvement** are shown in charts coloured in **orange**

There has been a consistent **increase** in the number of people Registered for SB Alert



The number of bed days associated to **Delayed Discharges** have continued to **increase** (NHS data)



## Performance Indicators Key

● Positive	There has been a notable improvement, or the data indicates a particularly positive position
○ Neutral	There has been no significant change since the previous review, and progress is satisfactory or as expected
● Focus for Improvement	There has been a notable reduction in performance, or the data suggests a position that we will be focusing on for improvement
ℹ Information only	The indicator shows data for information purposes only

# Summary of Performance



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy,  
transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant  
communities



Good health and  
wellbeing



Working together  
improving lives

## Key Milestones

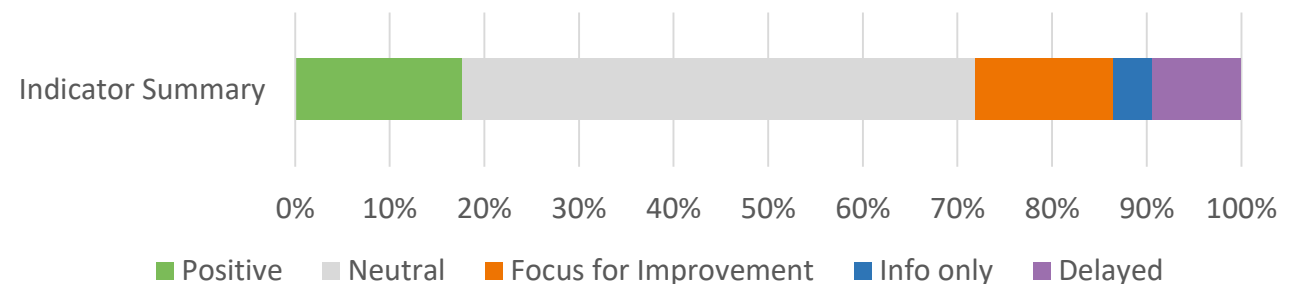
Progress against the milestones this quarter has been predominately positive. Of the 13 milestones reported in this quarter 10 of them are showing positive progress and work continues on progressing a number of the long-term workstreams.

There were three milestones where activity has not progressed as expected:

- The introduction of Parent Portal to improve Digital Customer Access was not progressed as it was not going to realise the benefits to SBC that had been hoped;
- A programme of curriculum reform incorporating National and International recommendations is now being included in the next Council Plan due to an extension in the consultation period by the Scottish Government, and
- Developing a Council Commissioning Framework has moved to Quarter 4 due to the timings of recruitment into the relevant post.

## Performance Indicators

Of the 96 indicators presented 52 are progressing as expected and do not show grounds for concern. 17 are considered to be showing positive progress, and 14 are highlighted as areas of focus for improvement. Four are provided for information only, and there is a delay in receiving the latest information for 9 of them.



# CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather



## Commence an extreme weather assessment of key coastal infrastructure and bridges

There are **1197** bridges in the Scottish Borders

Page 88



General and Scour bridge assessments have commenced which will **identify** those bridges most **vulnerable** to extreme weather events



Shoreline Management Plan **currently** being **developed**



Aim to complete by **summer 2023**

We are targeting completion of **2.5%** or 30 **scour** assessments this financial year

We are targeting completion of **33%** or 400 **general** bridge assessments this financial year

\* **Scour assessment:** determines level of risk associated with erosion/removal of material by the action of water

### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services and infrastructure that are ready to meet the needs of our communities in the face of climate changes and extreme weather events

## Commence review of the Council's greenspace maintenance operations to identify opportunities for improved environmental management

We are creating **naturalised grass habitats** within parks & amenity spaces



We have invested in machinery to optimise the management of naturalised grass habitats.

*Funded by the Nature Restoration Fund*

We are contributing to development of **Pollinators Along the Tweed** project:



- improved **environmental management** in green spaces along the Tweed corridor
- enhancing **pollinator habitats**

We are continuing to increase **wildflower biodiversity** areas



Working with communities on identifying and trialling sites

Additional tree planting of **50 trees**

*Nature Restoration funding to increase tree cover*



### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Protected, managed and restored environments which support the wellbeing of people and nature



# CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Waste Page 89	Annual Household Recycling Rate	56.88%	●
	Annual Household Waste Landfilled Rate	0.43%	○
	Annual Household Waste to Other Treatment	42.69%	●
	Annual Average Community Recycling Centre Recycling Rate	78.80%	●
Energy Services	Electricity Consumption (kWh)	2,630,328	○
	Gas Consumption (kWh)	5,383,398	●

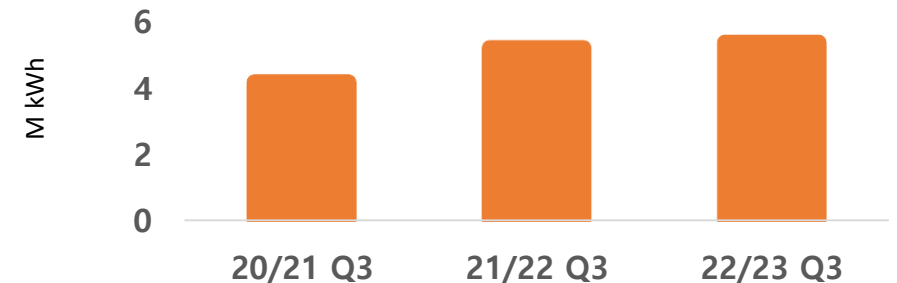
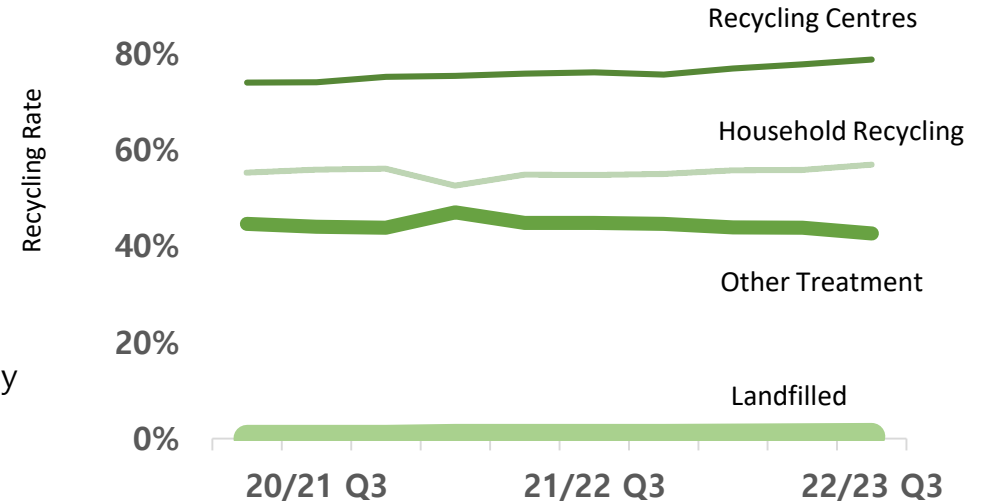
Key: ● Positive ○ Neutral  
● Focus for Improvement ⓘ Information only

The Recycling Rate within the Scottish Borders has continued to **increase** whilst the waste sent to landfill **continues to be below 1%**

This **positive situation** is due to a new contract commencing in July 2019, and further improvements introduced by the contractor for sorting recycling centre waste

Gas consumption **increased** by 3% compared to the same period last year. This is due to weather conditions and increased Covid ventilation requirements

There was also an **increase** in costs of 173% due to price increases



# FULLFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

**PRIORITY:** Empower communities and schools to deliver a high quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children and families



Develop a service directory which outlines available support for children and young people, families and professionals



Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Board has been working with the Inspire Team




An app is being developed which will go onto children and young people's iPads

Page 90

The app will be an asset map of activities which children and young people can engage with within their own area



App is to have a positive impact on mental health & wellbeing, encouraging prevention and early intervention.

App will facilitate children and young people being included, engaged & active within their school area 

### App Progress

- First round of data collection from young people completed
- Name of app under discussion with young people
- Prototype of app at final stages of completion
- Soft launch of app on iPads in March 2023
- Further development work, quality assurance and maintenance required moving forward.

Introduction of Parent Portal to improve digital customer access to services and information

This milestone was **not progressed** as it was not going to realise the benefits SBC had hoped for

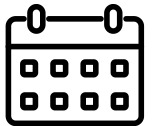


### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- A service which meets the diverse needs of our people and reduces inequalities

Embark on a programme of curriculum reform incorporating National and International (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development – OECD) recommendations

This milestone has been **moved to the next Council Plan** as the Scottish Government has extended the consultation period



### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- A service which meets the diverse needs of our people and reduces inequalities
- Effective mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people

### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

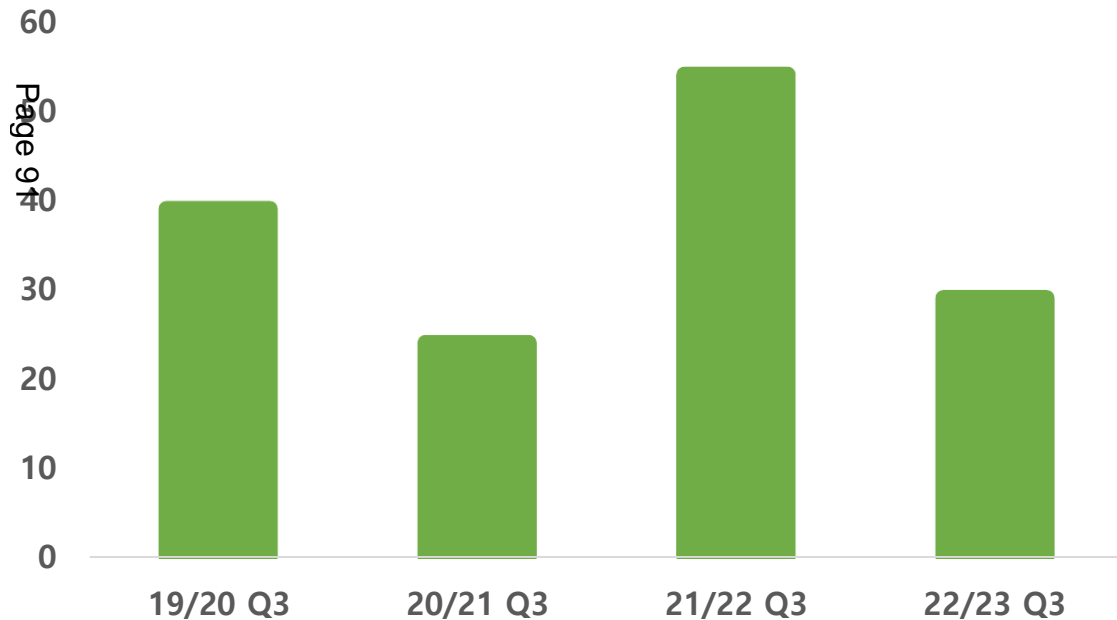
- Excellence in Learning

# FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

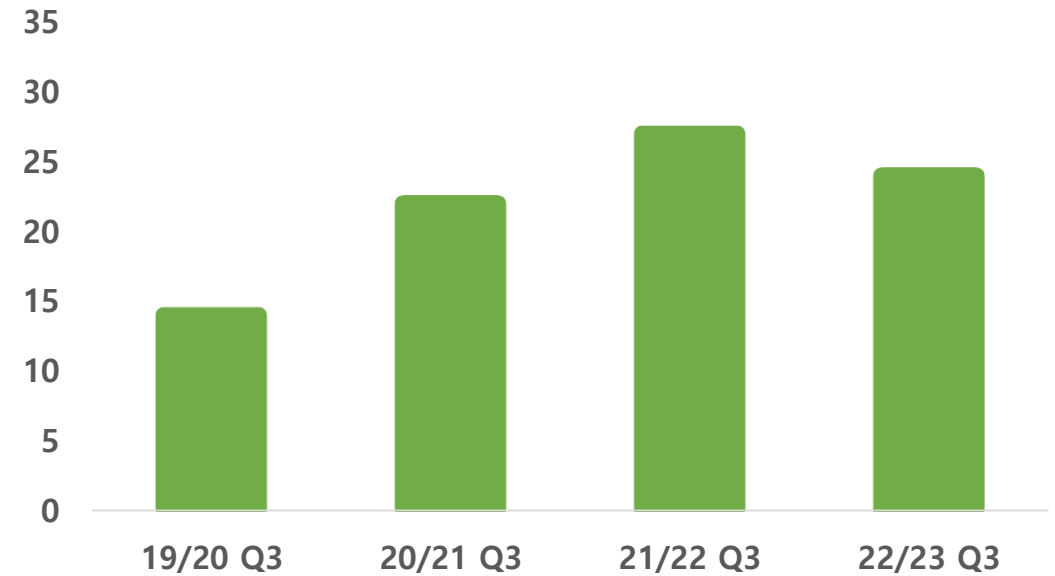
**PRIORITY:** Empower communities and schools to deliver a high quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children and families



The number of **New Modern Apprentices** employed by SBC remains at a positive level



Modern Apprentices **securing SBC employment** after apprenticeship in the year to date has continued to be **consistent**. Positive figures have been reported over the same quarter for the previous 3 years. The lower figure in 2019/20 was due to Covid.



# FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

**PRIORITY:** Empower communities and schools to deliver a high quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children and families



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
<b>Education</b>	What percentage of primary school pupils attend school?	91.97%	○
	What percentage of secondary school pupils attend school?	87.08%	○
	What percentage of primary and secondary school pupils attend school?	89.10%	○
	Number of Exclusion Incidents – Primary Schools	3	○
	How many primary school pupils were excluded?	3	○
	Number of Exclusion Incidents - Secondary Schools	29	○
	How many secondary school pupils were excluded?	29	○
	Number of Exclusion Incidents – Primary and Secondary Schools	3	○
	How many primary and secondary school pupils were excluded?	32	○
	Number of Schools/Nurseries inspected per Quarter	0	○
<b>Modern Apprentices</b>	New Modern Apprentices employed by SBC	29	●
	Current Modern Apprentices employed within SBC	47	○
	Modern Apprentices securing SBC employment after apprenticeship Cumulative Year to Date	24	●

# STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**PRIORITY:** Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and Regional Prosperity Framework - making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



## Commence delivery of a Local Employability Plan to ensure we support local employment opportunities

The Local Employability Partnership is active and meets **regularly**



Page 93

A **review** of the current employability plan is underway

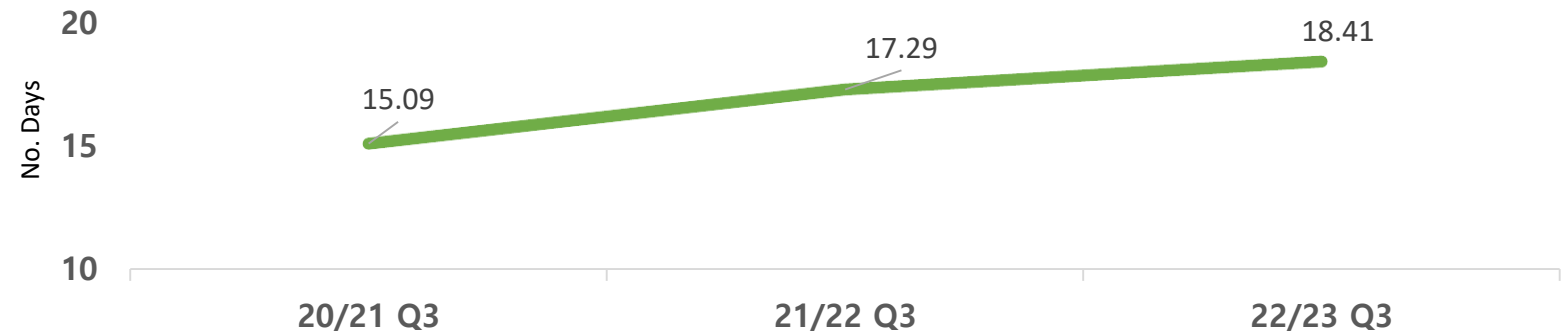


This review will address the **local employability needs**

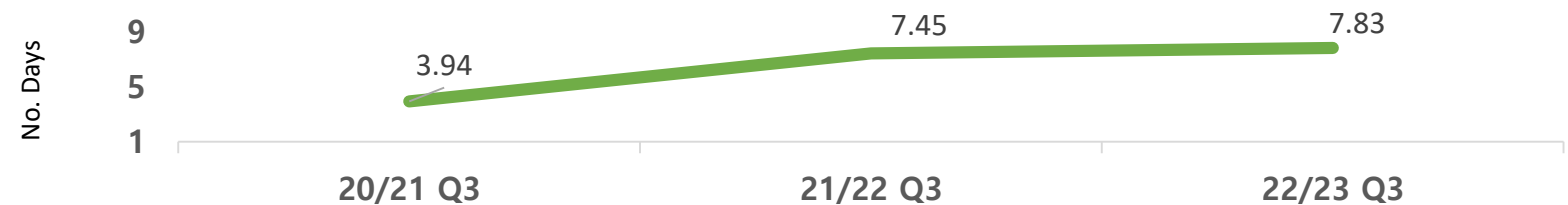
### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Support the employability prospects of young people, families and adults (Borderlands Growth Deal projects)

The time taken to process new housing benefit claims has increased compared to previous years. However, there have been an **increased** number of **new claims** made, so overall this pattern is seen as positive.



Automation of housing benefit change event recording has resulted in an expected increase in the number of days to process, however this figure should reduce significantly in Q4 and the **yearly figure is still on target**



# STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**PRIORITY:** Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and Regional Prosperity Framework – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Major Capital Projects	RAG status is "Green"	11	○
	RAG status is "Amber"	6	○
	RAG status is "Red"	0	○
Working Age Population	Working age population (16 - 64) employment rate	*76.6%	○
	Working age population (16 - 64) Claimant Count (including Universal Credit and JSA)	2.93%	○
	Working age population (18 - 24) Claimant Count (including Universal Credit and JSA)	4.13%	○
Customer Advice & Support - Financial Inclusion	Number of People referred in the quarter	Information Delayed	
	Monetary Gain for cases closed in the quarter	Information Delayed	
	Cumulative Monetary Gain for cases closed in the year to date	Information Delayed	
Customer Advice & Support – Housing Benefit	New Claims (Avg No. of Days to process)	18.41	●
	Change Events (Avg No. of Days to process)	7.83	●
Business Gateway	Total number of new Business Start-Ups (Business Gateway)	8	●
	Number of clients attending start-up workshops/seminars (Business Gateway)	Information Delayed	
Economic Dev & Procurement	Occupancy Rates of Industrial and Commercial Units	89%	○

\* Please Note that there is a lag of one Quarter for data provided for employment rates

Key: ● Positive ○ Neutral ● Focus for Improvement ⓘ Information only

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

**PRIORITY:** Support and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



## Commence work with people to shape a sustainable future for land and in buildings in their communities



Discussions with **3** new community groups commenced



Discussions are with a view to community groups to taking on land and/or buildings through **purchase** or **long term lease**

An information **video** which sets out the basics of asset transfer, in an accessible way, has been developed and **published** on the **SBC website**

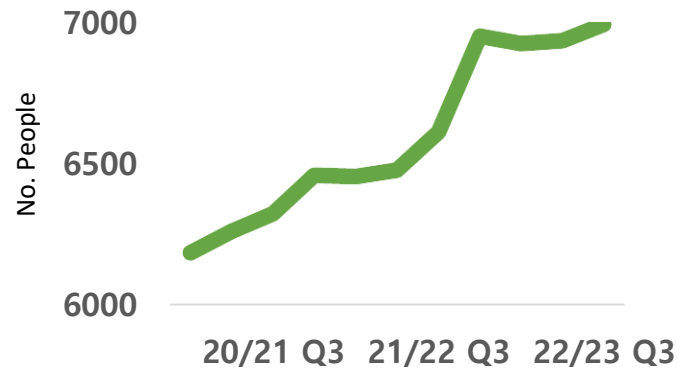


[Asset transfer | Scottish Borders Council](#)

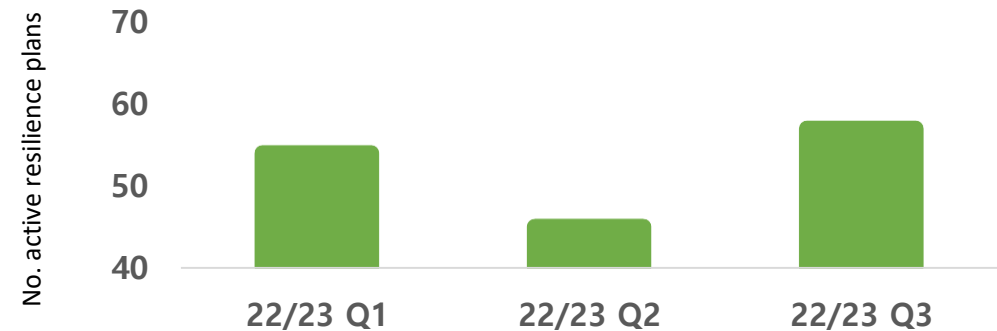
### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Modern, sustainable and simplified services that meet the needs of communities and other customers
- Services delivery arrangements aligned with the needs and priorities of communities
- Sustainable use of our land and buildings

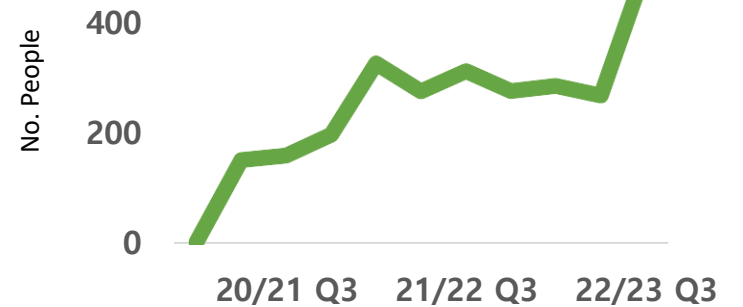
There has been a consistent **increase** in the number of people Registered for SB Alert



Following a reduction of active resilience plans earlier in the year, there has been an **increase** in Q3



There has been a consistent **increase** in the number people carrying out volunteer work since 2020/21



# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

**PRIORITY:** Support and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Community Funding -Asset Transfers	Number of Requests <b>Received</b>	0	○
	Number of Requests <b>Agreed</b>	0	○
	Number of Requests <b>Refused</b>	0	○
Community Funding - Participation Request	Number of Requests <b>Received</b>	0	○
	Number of Requests <b>Agreed</b>	0	○
	Number of Requests <b>Refused</b>	0	○
Community Funding	The number of people carrying out volunteer work with SBC	500	●
Community Funding – Value of Funding Awarded	Total Scottish Borders	£176,000	○
	Berwickshire	£47,000	○
	Cheviot	£14,000	○
	Eildon	£59,500	○
	Teviot & Liddesdale	£29,600	○
	Tweeddale	£25,600	○
	Borderswide	£0	○
	Neighbourhood Small Schemes Fund – Total Value of funds awarded (cumulative)	£337,098	○
Community Resilience	SB Alert - No. of people registered	6992	●
	No. of Active community resilience plans (cumulative)	57	●
	No. of Progressing community resilience plans (cumulative)	3	●



# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**PRIORITY:** The people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Continue to develop capital plans for the provision of facilities that enable people to be supported in a homely setting

Outline business case for **Hawick Care Village** was **approved** at January council



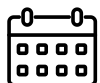
A full business case will now be **developed**

The **Extra Care Housing** (ECH) development at Kelso is nearing completion with an **opening date** now estimated at **June 2023**

#### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Improved National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and Public Health Priorities

Develop a Council Commissioning Framework, which includes Social Care, CGI and Live Borders



**Timeline changed** due to recruitment of post holder only commencing in Oct 2022. Has now been moved to **Q4**

#### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- The right services commissioned and developed with partners for Health and Social Care

Contribute to the joint needs assessments for all Integration Joint Board (IJB) delegated services to inform the priorities of the new IJB Strategic plan

The **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** (JSNA) and associated reports were made public in **November 2022**

Development of the Strategic Framework will be concluded & approved by **end of March 2023**

A report has been produced by the **National Development Team for Inclusion** (NDTi) entitled 'We Have Listened'. The report features feedback from engagement with:

- Staff
- key partners
- Communities
- unpaid carers
- Third Sector
- Partner providers

#### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Improved National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and Public Health Priorities
- Our services are flexible and will meet the outcomes of any future National Care Service

Fully utilise the technology that is available to facilitate mobile working, integrated working and the sharing of data across the Partnership

Managers have a **flexible scheduling** solution



- Assists with demand & capacity challenges faced by Health & Social Care Partnership
- Managers receive real-time updates

We continue to **progress** mobile solutions with the next development being within the **Enterprise Mobility** strand of the **Social Work Pathfinder**

Homecare Support Workers are now enabled to **receive & confirm completion** of homecare visits on mobile devices



#### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Our services are flexible and will meet the outcomes of any future National Care Service

# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**PRIORITY:** The people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.

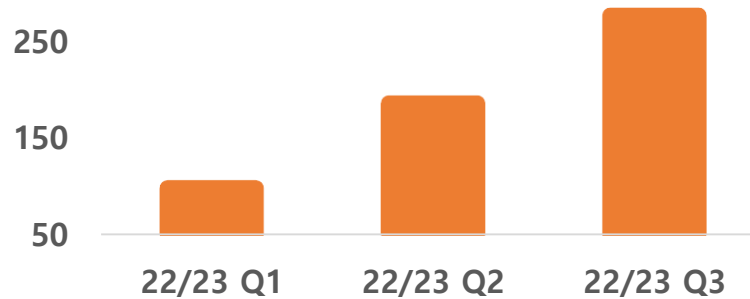


**100%** of referrals into the Mediation Service were progressed and agreement was reached in the year to date

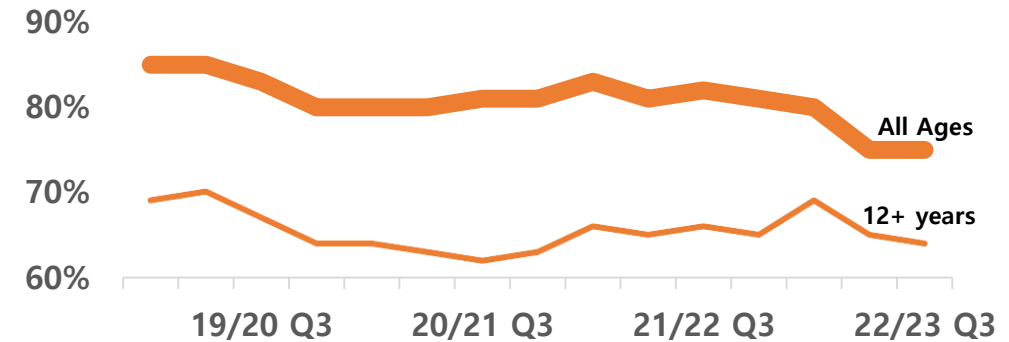
Page 98



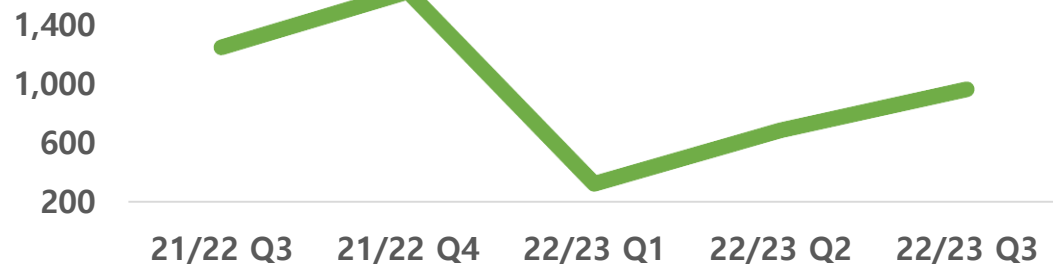
There has been an **increase** in the number of **referrals** made to the **Domestic Abuse Service** in the year to date



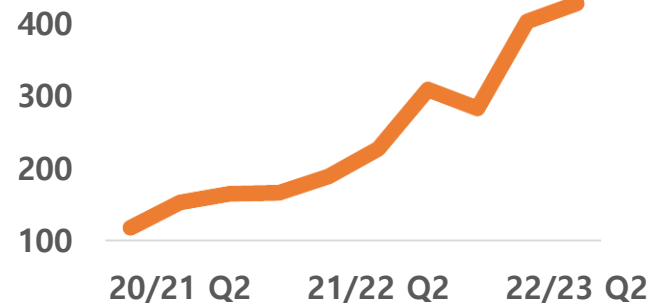
The percentage of **Looked After Children** in **family-based placements** has **decreased** for all children and also for those aged only 12 years and over



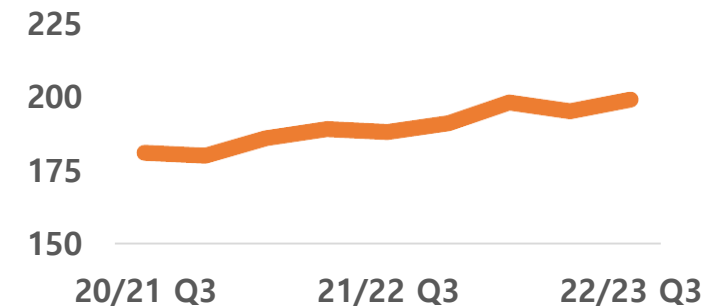
There has been an overall **decrease** in the number of cases monitored for **Anti-Social Behaviour** in the past year



The number of bed days associated to **Delayed Discharges** have continued to **increase** (NHS data)



The number of **Looked After Children** has remained relatively consistent over the past 2 years, although the number has **increased slightly**



# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**PRIORITY:** The people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Social Work C&F	Looked After Children (aged 12+) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	64%	●
	Looked After Children (All ages) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	75%	●
	Number of Looked After Children (LAC)	199	●
	Number of Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) held about a child	129	<i>i</i>
	Number of children on Child Protection Register	36	<i>i</i>
Adult Protection	Number of Concerns	50	○
	Number of Investigations	42	○
Economic Development & Procurement	Additional homes provided affordable to people in the Borders, based on our wages?	16	○
NHS	Bed days associated with delayed discharges in residents aged 75+; rate per 1,000 population	*428	●

\* Please Note that there is a lag of one Quarter for data provided for NHS data

# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**PRIORITY:** The people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Safer Communities	Number of Referrals To Domestic Abuse Services (Cumulative)	277	●
	Number of reported incidents of domestic abuse (cumulative)	Information Delayed	
	Number of High Risk domestic abuse cases discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) (cumulative)	97	●
	The percentage of referrals into the Mediation Service that were progressed and agreement was reached (cumulative)	100%	●
	The percentage of individuals who were satisfied with the Mediation Intervention on exit from the service (Cumulative)	No data yet as new PI	
	The number of referrals into the Mediation Service (Cumulative)	16	●
	The number of reported ASB Incidents (Cumulative)	3470	●
	Number of ASB Early Interventions	496	○
	Number monitored for ASB	959	●
	Number of Group 1-5 recorded crimes and offences (cumulative)	Information Delayed	

## Road Incidents

Unfortunately there were two fatalities as the result of road accidents in the Scottish Borders in Quarter 3 of 2022/23. This is an increase of 1 from the preceding 3 month period but a reduction of two from the corresponding quarter 3 in 2021/22.


There were 16 people seriously injured as a result of road accidents in the Scottish Borders in Quarter 3 of 2022/23. This is 2 less than the equivalent period of 2021/22 but 7 up on the previous quarter.

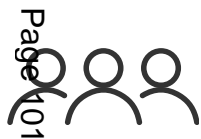
# WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



## Develop and implement career pathways from entry to director level across SBC, incorporating clear training plans and a digital skills programme

Work has **begun** on development & implementation of career pathways 



Continued development across SBC of:

- Career pathways
- Traineeships
- Apprenticeships

SBC have supported recruitment and retention via


- **Modern Apprenticeships** finding permanent post within SBC
- **Graduate Apprenticeships**
- **Social Work Traineeship Scheme**



### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Ongoing development of a talented and valued workforce where people can develop their skills and careers

## Review and enhance the way SBC buys services from other organisations, providers and partners to ensure best value and quality for customers, while exploring opportunities to support local suppliers

Pilot project to source all meat for secondary schools from Shaws Fine Meats in Lauder was a **success** 

- **Positive** feedback
- Providing support to the **local economy**
- Estimated **10k reduction** in delivery miles
- Enabled by Council's **Sustainability Board**

Currently reviewing how to move beyond pilot



Commercial and Commissioned Services:

- Continually **review** & **improve** procurement
- Work with **local** & **national partners**

We invested in contract management software

- Holds details of 612 live contracts
- Allows services to ensure maximum benefit from commercial relationships with Council suppliers

We expect to spend **£4m** on the **Repairs & Maintenance Framework** in 2022/23

- Provide opportunities to mainly **local suppliers**
- Work underway preparing for framework renewal next year, with the Supplier Development

**Programme poised to provide help and support to local suppliers to bid**



The framework **partners** include:

- Scottish Borders Housing Association
- Borders College
- Live Borders

The partners are expected to add another £1m

### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

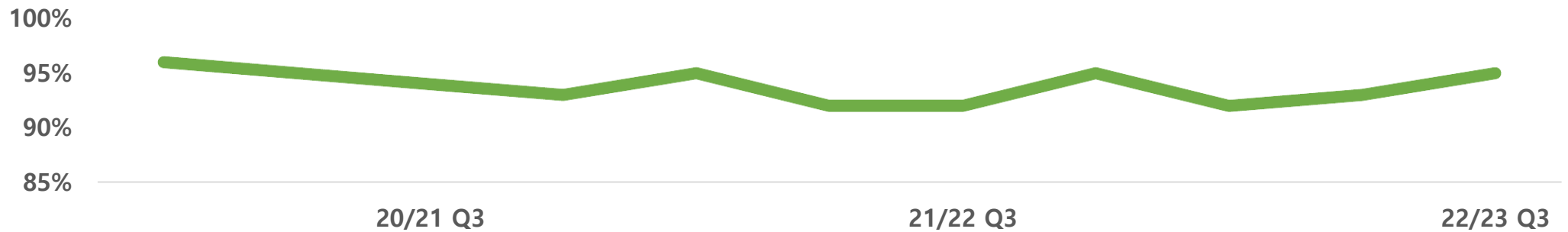
- Best value from all of our suppliers
- Performance-driven services
- Modern services which are continually evolving in line with Council Plan priorities
- SBC working with all partners in a joined up way

# WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.

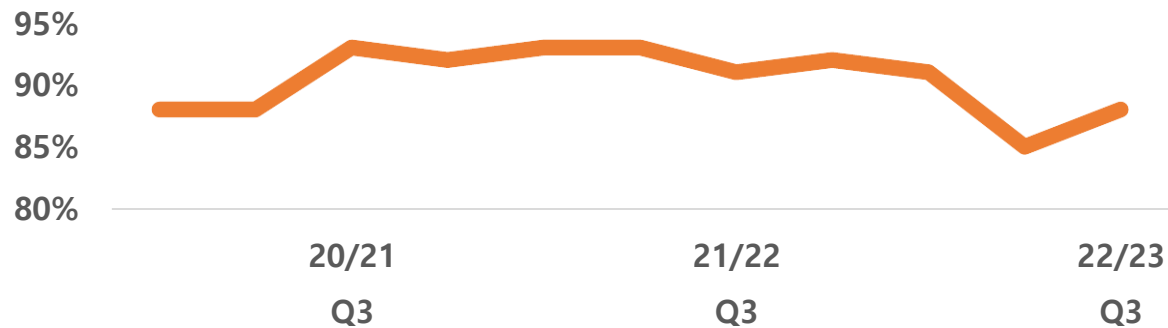


The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days **remains consistent** and has remained **above 90%** for the last 3 financial years

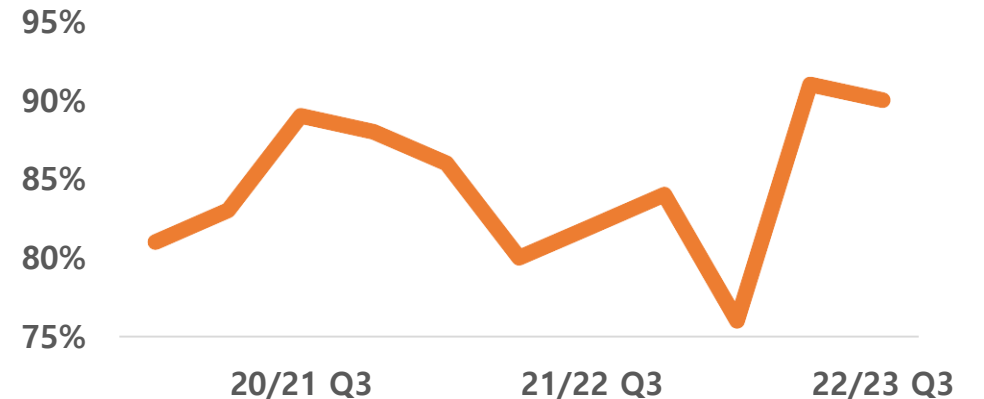


Page 102

The percentage of new properties being added to the Council Tax Valuation List is **88%** against our target of **93%**. Conflicting pressure with the development of a draft valuation roll has impacted on achieving our target.



Although the percentage of FOI Requests Completed on Time remains high further action needs to take place in order to meet the **target of 100%**

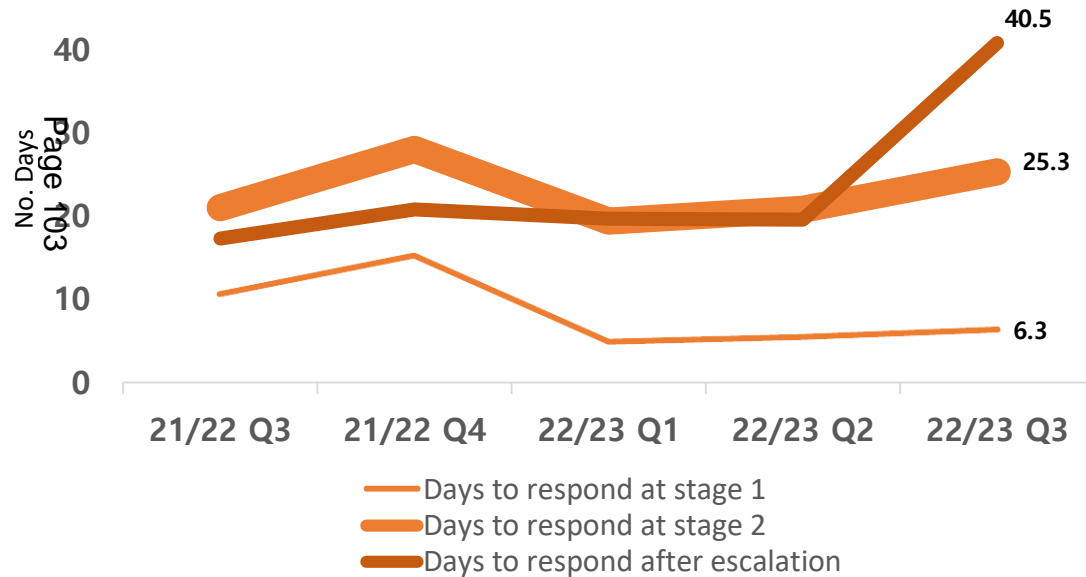


# WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

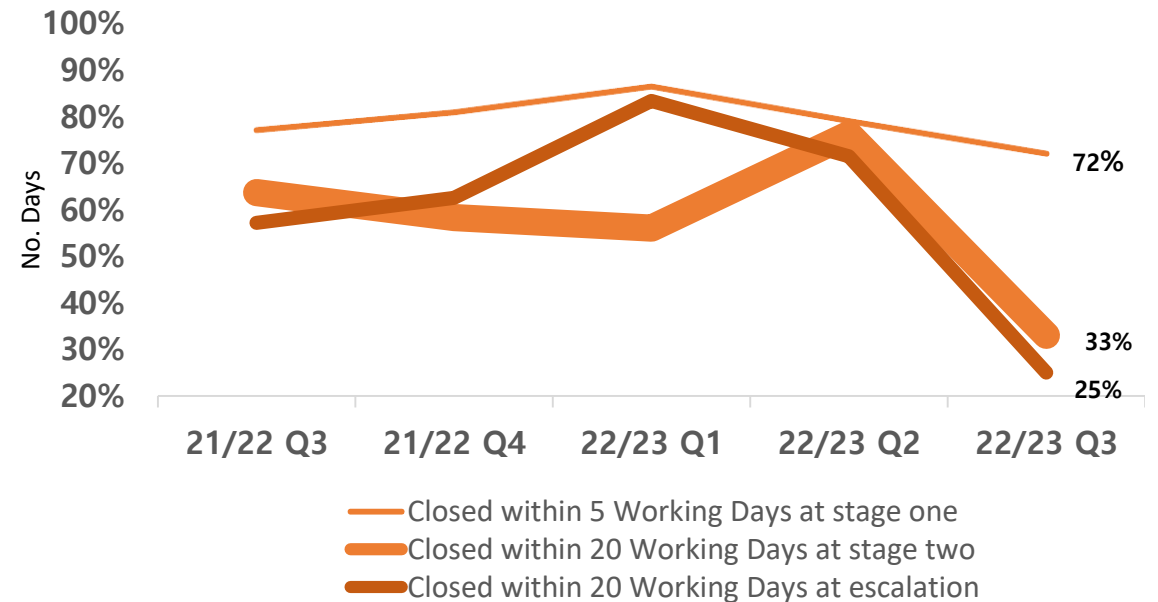
**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



The number of days taken to respond to complaints has **increased**.



The percentage of complaints closed within target timescales has **reduced**.



A **new system** to record complaints was implemented in Q3. Issues closing off some of the complaints may be affecting the timescales shown. We are investigating this and, along with further training and support, we expect to see an increase in performance going forwards.

# WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Planning Permission	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Maj Dev. - ADJUSTED (cumulative)		Information Delayed
	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (non-householder) - ADJUSTED (cumulative)		Information Delayed
	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (householder) - ADJUSTED (cumulative)		Information Delayed
	Number of Planning Applications Received	280	<i>i</i>
Council Tax	Council Tax – In Year Collection Level	81.59%	○
Property	Capital Receipts Generated (cumulative)	£401,000	○
	Properties surplus to requirements	17	○
	Properties actively being marketed	7	○
	Properties progressed to “under offer”	17	○
Complaints Handling	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one	6.3	●
	Performance against timescales: the number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as percentage of total number of stage one complaints	72%	●
	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two	25.3	●
	Performance against timescales: the number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as percentage of total number of stage two complaints	33%	●
	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	40.75	●
	Performance against timescales: the number of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days as a percentage of total number of escalated stage two complaints	25%	●
	Number of Complaints Closed	147	○

Key: ● Positive ○ Neutral ● Focus for Improvement *i* Information only



# WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



Service	Indicator	Q3 22/23	Status
Freedom of Information	FOI Requests Received	337	<i>i</i>
	Percentage of FOI Requests Completed on Time	90%	●
Social Media	Number of Facebook Engagements	1,237,970	○
	Number of Twitter Engagements	145,392	○
Assessor Page 105	Council Tax Valuation List-Time taken to add new properties to the List	88%	●
	Valuation Roll (Non Domestic)-Time taken to amend the valuation roll to reflect new, altered or demolished properties	57%	○
Staff Absences	SBC Absence Rate – Staff	6.06%	○
	SBC Absence Rate – Teaching Staff	4.91%	○
	Staff Absence Rate (overall)	5.78%	○
Economic Dev & Procurement	Percentage of Invoices paid within 30 days	95%	○
Customer Contact	Voice calls Answered	*24,441	○

\* Please note that this PI is place of the previous Customer Contact PIs

Key: ● Positive ○ Neutral ● Focus for Improvement *i* Information only

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

# PERFORMANCE REPORT

Page 107 Q3-2022/23 CAT REPORT



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant communities



Good health and wellbeing



Working together improving lives



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy,  
transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant  
communities



Good health and  
wellbeing



Working together  
improving lives

# Q3 COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM REPORT

This report gives details of the actions of the Community Action Team (CAT) over Quarter 3.

During Q3 of 2022/23 the Community Action Team has:

- Carried out 104 hours of foot patrols, 1034 hours of mobile patrols, and 71 static road checks
- Issued 80 parking tickets and 20 Anti-Social Behaviour warning letters to under 18s
- Carried out 15 Person Drug searches (40% positive) and 17 Premises Drug searches (88% positive).



# COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

## IMPACT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 - OCTOBER 2022 to DECEMBER 2022

BERWICKSHIRE	CHEVIOT	EILDON	TEVIOT	TWEEDDALE
<b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>	<b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>	<b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>	<b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>	<b>TASKING DURING PERIOD</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAT officers acted on reports received regarding off-road motorcycling in Modynut Forest, Duns.</li> <li>CAT officers were involved in an operation to deter rural crime and hare coursing.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following intelligence received two drug warrants were executed in Kelso in October.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In October officers acted on intelligence suggesting fireworks were being sold to children from an address Galashiels.</li> <li>CAT officers conducted high visibility patrols at the Transport Interchange to deter youth offending.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following intelligence received a drugs warrant was executed in Hawick in November.</li> <li>CAT carried out Licensed Premises Checks in December.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased incidents regarding young people causing issues in Peebles in September and October.</li> <li>CAT carried out static road checks in Skirling and Broughton as part of the winter safety campaign.</li> </ol>
<b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF IMPACT</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One vehicle was issued with a warning in December for driving off road.</li> <li>Static and mobile road checks were carried out throughout Berwickshire, which was met with a positive response from local communities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supply amounts of Cocaine and Cannabis were recovered.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The address was searched and 7 boxes of fireworks were seized for destruction.</li> <li>A number of youths were engaged with and 14 youth warning letters were sent out in October.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash, cannabis, heroin and diazepam were recovered.</li> <li>The high visibility presence within the pubs helped to deter antisocial behaviour and violent crime.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAT and partner agencies engaged with young people to discourage antisocial behaviour, resulting in a significant reduction in reports in November and December.</li> <li>Winter safety advice given to drivers. 2 traffic tickets were issued regarding careless driving.</li> </ol>

### COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM (CAT) ACTIONS

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Raised in Quarter	5	5	6		4	3	4		10	5	12		5	6	7		6	3	5	
Accepted in Quarter	2	4	3		3	3	1		7	4	7		3	3	5		2	2	3	

<b>% of tasking accepted by the CAT across all localities</b>	<b>2021/22</b> 73%	<b>2022/23 Year to Date</b> 56%
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**NOTE:** Not all issues received and discussed at the CAT oversight group meeting are taken on as actions by the CAT. Some actions may be more appropriately followed up and actioned by another service within SBC or by a partner organisation. Also some actions are tasked directly through Police Scotland so are not reflected in the figures above but show the impact the team is having in the Borders.

# COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

## IMPACT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 - OCTOBER 2022 to DECEMBER 2022



Page 110

### HI-VISIBILITY FOOT PATROL (HOURS)



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
254	170	104	

Foot patrols are the number hours CAT officers spend in a specific location carrying out foot patrols. The figure quoted is in individual officer hours.

### MOBILE PATROL (HOURS)



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1589	1190	1034	

Mobile patrols are those carried out in marked Police Scotland vehicles and can involve 1 or more officers. The figure quoted is in individual officer hours.

### STATIC ROAD CHECKS



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
64	68	71	

Static road checks are proactive stops of vehicles in known problem locations to prevent or detect criminal or antisocial acts involving vehicles.

### ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR WARNING LETTERS ISSUED TO UNDER 18s



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
17	17	20	

Where young people aged under 18 are evidenced committing antisocial behaviour (including drinking alcohol) warning letters are issued to parents/guardians to advise them of the situation.

### NUMBER OF DRUG SEARCHES UNDERTAKEN PERSONS



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
34	13	15	

**40%** of searches were positive for drugs in quarter 3.

### NUMBER OF DRUG SEARCHES UNDERTAKEN PREMISES



Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
13	13	17	

**88%** of searches were positive for drugs in quarter 3.

	BERWICKSHIRE				CHEVIOT				EILDON				TEVIOT				TWEEDDALE			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>PARKING:</b> No of Tickets Issued	1	2	0		37	35	18		28	11	42		49	18	13		6	3	7	
<b>2022/23 Year to date all localities</b>	<b>Q1</b>				<b>Q2</b>				<b>Q3</b>				<b>Q4</b>							
	121				69				80											

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## **COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRE – BOOKING SYSTEM**

**Report by Director of Infrastructure & Environment**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**14 March 2023**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report proposes that the Council retains the current Community Recycling Centre booking system, which covers trailers and large vehicles, and expands it to include small vans.**
- 1.2 The Council introduced a booking system for trailers and large vans in response to the COVID pandemic.
- 1.3 Now that the majority of COVID restrictions have been lifted a decision on the long term need for a booking system is required.
- 1.4 The key benefits of the current booking system have been:
  - It reduces customer waiting times as larger vehicles, which take longer to unload, are spread throughout the day.
  - It reduces the health and safety risk and impact on local businesses, associated with queuing traffic outside the sites.
  - It allows the Council to monitor illegal use of the sites by traders who have not purchased a Trade Waste Permit.
- 1.5 Four options have been considered going forwards ranging from complete withdrawal of the booking system to requiring all vehicles to pre-book.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommend that the Executive Committee:-**
  - (a) Retains the current Community Recycling Centre booking system, which covers trailers and large vehicles, and expands it to include small vans.**
  - (b) Delivers the proposed improvements to the booking system as outlined in section [10.3](#).**

- (c) Notes the benefits of the booking system in relation to:**
- **Reducing waiting times**
  - **Reducing queues out with the sites, which create H&S risks and impacts local businesses**
  - **Controlling misuse of sites by traders who have not purchased permits.**
- (d) Notes that the majority of visits to Community Recycling Centres are made by car and are therefore unaffected by the existing and proposed booking system.**



### 3 BACKGROUND

3.1 In March 2020 the Council shut its Community Recycling Centres due to the COVID Pandemic. When the sites re-opened in June 2020 the decision was taken to restrict access to cars only, in order to:

- Manage demand
- Reduce the risk of queuing traffic; and
- Ensure the safety of customers and staff

3.2 During the following months the Council received an increasing number of requests to allow larger vehicles back into the sites. In response the Council introduced a **booking system for trailers and large vehicles only**, which enabled us to control the numbers on site at any one time.

3.3 Now that the majority of COVID restrictions have been lifted a decision is required on the long term need for a booking system.

### 4 CURRENT BOOKING SYSTEM

#### 4.1 VEHICLES REQUIRED TO BOOK

4.1.1 The following vehicles are currently required to book before visiting a Community Recycling Centre:

- Vehicles over two tonnes in weight when carrying their maximum permitted load, for example; Ford Transit, Vauxhall Vivaro and Volkswagen Transporter – see [appendix 1](#).
- Vehicles pulling any size or type of trailer.

4.1.2 A vehicle's maximum permitted load can be found on a vehicle's V5C document or via [the Government website](#). This weight is referred to as either the Maximum Permissible Mass or the Revenue Weight.

#### 4.2 EXEMPT VEHICLES

The following vehicles are exempt from the booking system:

- Large vehicles modified for accommodating a passenger who travels in the vehicle in a wheelchair, if they are a blue badge holder
- People carriers such as the Citroën Berlingo or Volkswagen Touran (see [appendix 1](#)) when a small amount of waste is being deposited. However, if the additional space is utilised to accommodate more waste these vehicles are classified as a large vehicle and require a booking slot.

### 4.3 HOW THE BOOKING SYSTEM WORKS

4.3.1 Bookings can be made on the [Council website](#) or by calling Customer First on 0300 100 1800.

4.3.2 A number of 20 minute slots are available at each of the Community Recycling Centres, see table below.

Day of the week	Slots available per site per day
Monday to Friday	15
Saturday & Sunday	18
Late Night - one day per week during the summer	21

4.3.3 You can book up to a week in advance.

4.3.4 If slots are available, bookings can be made on the same day - the cut off is 9am for morning bookings and 12pm for afternoon bookings.

4.3.5 You can make up to two bookings per day.

## 5 BENEFITS OF THE BOOKING SYSTEM

5.1 It reduces customer waiting times as larger vehicles, which take longer to unload, are spread throughout the day.

5.2 It reduces the health and safety risk, and impact on local businesses, associated with queuing traffic outside the sites, as detailed below.

- **Eshiels** – Queuing presents a risk at the junction to the A72 and also restricts access to and from the main depot including salt barn.
- **Hawick** – Queuing impacts Borders Hardware and also restricts access to and from the Council’s main depot.
- **Kelso** – Queuing impacts access to Kelso depot and Lloyds Land Rover Garage.
- **Duns** – Queuing impacts industrial estate traffic
- **Selkirk** – Queuing impacts industrial estate traffic

See [appendix 2](#) for staff feedback on queuing traffic.

5.3 It allows the Council to monitor illegal use of the sites by traders who have not purchased a Trade Waste Permit. Trader abuse increases the cost of operating Community Recycling Centres at a time when the Council cannot afford it.

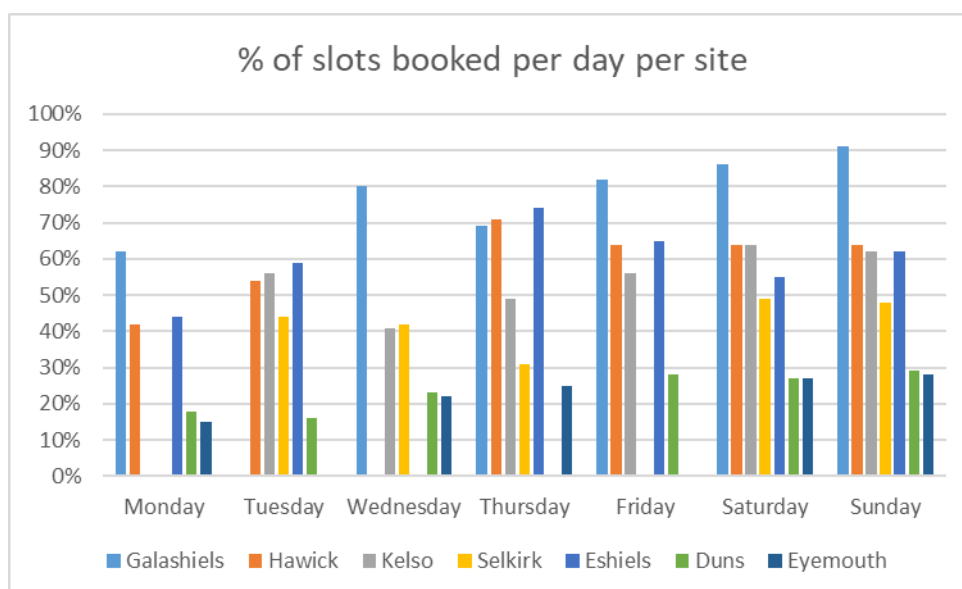
**IMPORTANT** – In September 2022 the Council issued letters to 14 individuals suspected of tipping trade waste without a permit. The booking system played a critical role in being able to evidence this illegal and costly practice. It costs the Council in excess of £130/t to dispose of general waste, not including the Council’s handling costs.

5.4 It impacts relatively few site users as the majority of visits are made by car while improving the onsite customer experience due to reduced waiting times and health & safety risks. See [appendix 3](#) for details on UK vehicle data.

## 6 PERFORMANCE

6.1 Each booking is recorded which enables us to review the performance of the system. Of particular interest is how many bookings are made on average per day and whether there is enough capacity to cope with demand.

6.2 The graph below outlines the percentage of slots booked per day per site between January and September 2022.



6.3 This indicates that Galashiels has the highest number of bookings followed by Eshiels, Hawick and Kelso. Eyemouth has the least number of bookings followed by Duns and Selkirk.

6.4 Further analysis of the data indicates that all sites except Galashiels have capacity to cope with demand, see table below. However, there are occasions when all slots are utilised. The site where this is most prevalent is Galashiels which is operating at between 62% and 91% capacity.

Site	% of slots booked per day	
	Min	Max
Galashiels	62%	91%
Eshiels	44%	74%
Hawick	42%	71%
Kelso	41%	64%
Selkirk	31%	49%
Duns	16%	29%
Eyemouth	15%	28%

## 7 FEEDBACK

### 7.1 Complaints

7.1.1 Five official complaints have been received since the introduction of the booking system over 2 years ago. This is in contrast to the hundreds of thousands of visits to the sites over the same period.

7.1.2 In response to customer and staff feedback the booking system has been updated and improved since it was introduced, for example:

- Allowing bookings to be made on the day of the visit
- Increasing the number of booking individuals can make per day from 1 to 2.
- Allowing vehicles that have not booked to tip if, in the view of the CRC attendant, the site is quiet. This will not be permitted if it becomes a regular request by the same individual/business.

### 7.2 Public Survey

7.2.1 A public survey was undertaken in June 2022 with site users asked the following questions:

- (a) Have you used the booking system?
- (b) What are your views on the system?

7.2.2 In total 217 people took part in the survey of which:

- 59 had used the system
- 157 hadn't used the system
- 1 person didn't answer

7.2.3 The following details the views of the 59 people who had used the booking system:

- 44 happy with the current system
- 2 felt that it helped control queuing
- 1 felt it controlled larger vehicles depositing more waste
- 10 disagreed with having to use a booking system
- 8 found the current system difficult to use
- 2 did not comment

As can be seen the majority of the feedback was positive.

### 7.3 Staff Survey

The full details of the staff survey can be found at [appendix 4](#). The key findings are detailed below:

- 72% felt that the system had helped identify illegal use of the sites by traders.
- 72% felt the system should be expanded to require all traders to book in and not just trailers and large vehicles.

- 52% felt that householders found the booking system to be inconvenient.
- 28% felt the system could be improved.
- 28% felt the public did not agree with the system.
- There was a general feeling the system should be expanded to cover all traders.

## 8 BENCHMARKING

8.1 Many Local Authorities across the UK introduced booking system following the COVID pandemic. In Scotland, 23 out of 32 (72%) Local Authorities currently have a booking system in place, see [appendix 5](#).

8.2 Further analysis confirms that:

- 8 Councils (25%) require all vehicles to book
- 10 Councils (31%) require people carriers to book
- 23 Councils (72%) require small vans and trailers to book.

This shows that requiring vans and trailers to book is the most popular option, with a smaller proportion requiring all vehicles to book.

## 9 OPTIONS

9.1 Four potential options have been considered going forwards, see table below:

Option	Vehicle type required to book			
	Cars	Small vans	Large Vehicles	Trailers
1. Current scheme	No	No	Yes	Yes
2. Current scheme plus small vans	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. All vehicles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. Withdraw scheme	No	No	No	No

9.2 Options 2 & 3 require increasing numbers of vehicle types to pre book and Option 4 would see the complete withdrawal of the booking scheme.

9.3 Each option has been considered against the key outcomes the Council is looking to achieve, that is to:

- Reduce waiting times and queues outside the sites which pose a risk to traffic and impact local businesses.
- Reduce the amount of illegal use of sites by traders which places an additional financial burden on the Council.
- Minimise the burden/inconvenience for site users prior to visiting the site.

9.4 The table below outlines the ranking of each options following the modelling exercise:

Rank	Options
1	2 - Current scheme plus small vans
2	1 - Current Scheme
3	3 - All vehicles
4	4 - Withdraw scheme

For further information on the modelling exercise see [appendix 6](#).

9.5 The analysis indicates that complete withdrawal of the scheme (option 4) is the least effective at achieving the Council’s desired outcomes. This is largely due to the fact that waiting times and queuing will increase for the majority of site users and it will make it easier for traders to tip without paying. That said this option is the least inconvenient for residents with larger vehicles and trailers wishing to use the sites.

9.6 In contrast **Option 2 is the most effective at achieving the Council’s desired outcomes**. This is largely due to the fact it helps control waiting times, queuing and trader abuse whilst inconveniencing a relatively small number of site users.

9.7 The current scheme (Option 1) is ranked second behind Option 2. This is predominantly because it is less effective than option 2 at controlling the illegal use of the sites by traders.

9.8 Option 3 was ranked third overall. Analysis suggests that it will be the most effective at controlling illegal use of the sites by traders but it will be inconvenient for a much larger number of site users. This is because it requires all vehicles to book prior to arrival at site.

## 10 RECOMMENDATION

10.1 It is recommended that the Council retains a booking system in the form of Option 2. This will increase the number of vehicles required to book prior to visiting the site to include small vans and company branded vehicles, see table below.

Vehicle Type	Current System - Option 1	Recommended System – Option 2
Cars	No	No
Small vans	No	Yes
Large Trailers	Yes	Yes
Trailers	Yes	Yes

10.2 The key benefit that Option 2 provides over the current scheme (Option 1) is that it enables the Council to more closely monitor and control trader abuse and it impacts/inconveniences a comparatively small number of site users.

**IMPORTANT** – The majority of site users visit by car, not trailer, small van or large vehicles.

10.3 In addition it is recommended that the following actions are taken to improve the booking system and make it more accessible:

Action	Reason
Increase the number of booking slots available per day.	Improves the accessibility and flexibility of the service.  Reduces likelihood of not being able to get a slot.
Reduce the cut off time for bookings to 1 hour prior to the customer visit, (where slots are available).  Currently the booking cut off is 9am for morning bookings and 12pm for afternoon bookings.	Improves the accessibility and flexibility of the service.  Service users don't always know when they will need to visit a Community Recycling Centre so provides more responsive and flexible service for site users.
Provide each site with a smartphone so that staff can monitor bookings.	Will help staff view live bookings which may change at short notice.  Removes need to return to site office to check computer for new bookings.

## 11 IMPLICATIONS

### 11.1 Financial

As the Council already operates a booking system there are no expected additional costs other than the purchase of 7 smartphones at a total cost of £2,800 to £4,200 depending on the model. However, it is likely the smartphones will be made available at no additional cost as part of the Council's wider roll out of smartphones to frontline staff.

### 11.2 Risk and Mitigations

The following details the risk of keeping the booking system in the form of Option 2:

RISK	MITIGATION
Increased number of complaints from residents now required to pre-book.	Implement proposed improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the cut off time for bookings to 1 hour.</li> <li>• Increase number of booking slots available per day</li> <li>• Provide each site with a smartphone to support late bookings.</li> </ul> See section 10.3 for more detail.

The following details the risk of withdrawing the booking system:

<b>RISK</b>	<b>MITIGATION</b>
Increased waiting times and queues outside the sites which pose a risk traffic and impact local businesses.	Maintain the booking system in the form of Option 2.
Increased amount of illegal use of sites by traders placing an additional financial burden on the Council.	Maintain the booking system in the form of Option 2.

### 11.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

The table below summarises the key findings of the full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), specifically detailing the groups that may be negatively impacted by the proposal, the potential impacts and the mitigating actions.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Potential negative impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Age	Those in the older age group may find accessing and using the online booking system more challenging.	Bookings can be made by phone as well as online.
Disability	Those with a physical disability may be more likely to use a vehicle that requires to pre-book i.e. an adapted large vehicle.	Exemptions provided for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large vehicles modified to accommodate a passenger who travels in the vehicle with a wheelchair are not required to book if they are a blue badge holder.</li> <li>• People carriers such as the Citroen Berlingo are not required to book when a small amount of waste is being deposited, however if the additional space is utilised to accommodate more waste it will be classified as a large vehicle and will require a booking slot.</li> </ul>

See [appendix 7](#) for more detail.



## 11.4 Sustainable Development Goals

The impact of the proposal on the UN Sustainable Development Goals has been undertaken. The table below summarises the findings.

UN Sustainable Development Goal	Impact
8 – Promote Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Positive – Helps to minimise queues outside Community Recycling Centres which impact local businesses and industrial estates.  Positive – Encourages businesses to take financial responsibility for their waste, thereby incentivising them to reduce and recycle as much as possible.
11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable	Positive - Helps to minimise queues outside Community Recycling Centres and reduces the risk this may pose to local road users.
12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Positive – Reduces waiting times for the majority of site users thus improving user experience. Any improvement in user experience is likely to promote the re-use and recycling of materials on site.  Positive – Encourages businesses to take financial responsibility for their waste, thereby incentivising them to reduce and recycle as much as possible.

## 11.5 Climate Change

The Council currently recycles or re-uses around 76% of the waste deposited at Community Recycling Centres. A key aim of the booking system is to improve the site user experience by reducing waiting times and queues outwith the site. It is hoped that by improving the experience for the majority of site users it will help maximise recycling and re-use performance and support the circular economy principles.

## 11.6 Rural Proofing

A rural proofing assessment has identified that those that do not have access to broadband or mobile data will not be able to book online. However, they will be able to book by telephone by contacting customer first.

## 11.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

You need to consider any Data Protection implications in the proposals contained in your report and provide one of the following statements:

- All potential risks of non-compliance with Data Protection legislation have been identified, assessed and recorded within a Data Protection Impact Assessment. The controls to mitigate any potentially negative impacted identified within the Assessment have been/will be implemented to ensure the proposed change to/new data processing complies with Data Protection legislation.

## 11.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposal.

## 12 CONSULTATION

12.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council, Corporate Communications and the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Officer have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Name**

**John Curry**

**Title**

**Director – Infrastructure & Environment**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Ross Sharp-Dent Clinton Sharkey	Waste & Passenger Transport Manager

**Background Papers:** [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]

**Previous Minute Reference:** [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Ross Sharp-Dent can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at [RSharp-Dent@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:RSharp-Dent@scotborders.gov.uk)

## **APPENDIX 1 - VEHICLES**

### **EXAMPLE VEHICLES REQUIRED TO BOOK**

#### **Vauxhall Vivaro**



#### **Ford Transit**



#### **Volkswagen Transporter**



### **EXEMPT VEHICLES - IF CARRYING SMALL QUANTITIES**

#### **Citroen Berlingo**



#### **Volkswagen Touran**



## Appendix 2 – Site Queuing – Staff Feedback (April 2022)

Staff name	1	2	3	4	5	6
Site	Hawick					
Do you have issues with queuing at the site	yes due to flood works, there is always queues doesn't matter whats happening	No	No hasn't been busy due to flood works	Yes	No only flood work issues	Yes flood works traffic lights
Does this queuing create any issues (affect traffic, businesses), if yes can you explain these issues	affects border hardware		N/A	Yes when the lights were there, hardware store but not as bad now	n/a	n/a
If yes					n/a	n/a
Is there any specific days queuing occurs?	Thursday is worst after Wednesday closure day, weekend also. Queue on other days too		N/A	Thursday and mornings as before opening and sometimes after lunch	n/a	n/a
Is there any specific times queuing occurs?	queing is the worst from 9.40am until 10am opening and before the luchtime reopening. Occasionally you have queuing at other times throughout the day. The flood prevention traffic works can cause queuing.		N/A	Thursday and morningas before opening and sometimes after lunch	n/a	n/a
Average number of cars queuing			N/A	4 to 5	n/a	n/a

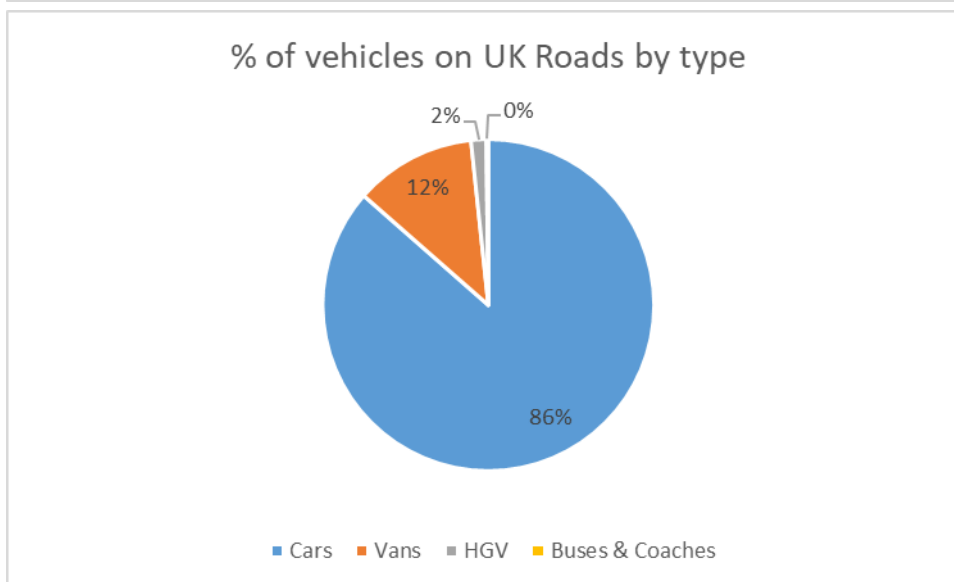
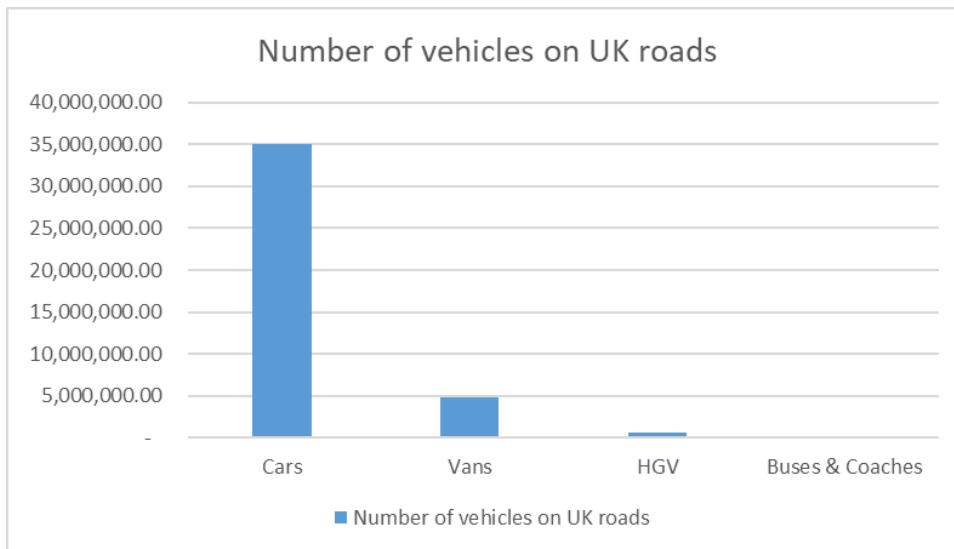
Staff name	7	8	9	10
Site	Kelso		Selkirk	
Do you have issues with queuing at the site	yes	Yes	Occasionally but not very often	No
Does this queuing create any issues (affect traffic, businesses), if yes can you explain these issues	this causes issues with the local businesses and access to businesses and SBC premises	Llyods landrover have raised concerns, queue can go around as far as Sainsburys. Affects Mark accessing site to clear skips	No	No
If yes				
Is there any specific days queuing occurs?	worst day is Tuesday but depending on different factor such as weather, holiday then queuing occurs. Weekends ok as businesses closed	Tuesday	No	Tuesday busy but no queuing
Is there any specific times queuing occurs?	Tuesday 10am - 12pm, 2pm - 3pm. If the weather is bad then sometimes there is no queuing on this day.	Opening time morning and after lunch	Sometimes due to weather, common riding as people are preparing gardens for their parties queuing occurs around 1.50pm until the gate opens at 2pm.	
Average number of cars queuing		5 to 15 cars	5	

Staff name	11	12	13	14
Site	Easter Langlee			
Do you have issues with queuing at the site	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does this queuing create any issues (affect traffic, businesses), if yes can you explain these issues	Only if cars park on yellow hatching so bin lorries cant pass	Gala have issues with cars queuing and parking on hatching so have issues when trying to exit WTS	Cars parked in hatching preventing him from turning right in hooklift to go get fuel	Gala have issues with cars queuing and parking on hatching so have issues when trying to exit WTS
If yes				
Is there any specific days queuing occurs?	Normally only there on a Monday	Random	Random apart from Tuesday when site closed	Random
Is there any specific times queuing occurs?	Opening after lunch	N/A	Random apart from Tuesday when site closed	N/A
Average number of cars queuing	8 to 16	Only issue when cars in hatching		Only issue when cars in hatching

Staff name	15	16	17	18
Site	Eshiels			Duns
Do you have issues with queuing at the site	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes due Work Vans - metal works or fish place parked in front of compound
Does this queuing create any issues (affect traffic, businesses), if yes can you explain these issues	potentially affect the A72, If they park on yellow hatching it prevents access to WTS	Yes other departments and it is a safty issue	yes when the artic needs to access the site then he has to navigate past waiting traffic or traffic exit site. Don't have an issue with cars parked in hatching they usual stay clear of this.	Trapped in compound or unable to enter, he has spoken to drivers and they say they need to unload
If yes				n/a
Is there any specific days queuing occurs?	I work there at weekend	Cant judge just happens randomly	Everyday	n/a
Is there any specific times queuing occurs?	Opening after lunch	Always prior to opening times and lasts for couple of hours, and just before lunch. Recently it has been around the 4pm time.	N/A	n/a
Average number of cars queuing	9 to 16 and it is getting busier	2 - 15 cars	15 TO 20	n/a

### APPENDIX 3 – NUMBER OF VEHICLES BY TYPE ON UK ROADS

UK vehicle data suggests that 86% of vehicles on the road are cars and only 12% are small vans, see table and graph below:



Source – Society of Motor Manufacturer (SMMT – June 2022)  
[Fewer cars on the road, but more small vans, trucks and buses - SMMT](#)

According to the Department of Transport there are around 890,000 trailers (750 to 3,500 kg) in the UK. This means around 2.5% of car owners may have a trailer.

[Trailer Safety \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



## APPENDIX 4 – Staff Survey

We asked:

- **What do you think householder's perception of the booking system is?**
  - 13 people felt that the public see the system as inconvenient
  - 10 people said they don't know
  - 2 people said they thought the public were happy with it
  
- **What changes would you make to the booking system to improve it for householders?**
  - 2 people said we could provide more assistance to those struggling with the system
  - 1 person said to make providing their email address compulsory
  - 1 person said we should better advertise the system
  - 2 people said we should remove the system altogether
  - 7 people said the current format of the system needs improved (make it more fit for purpose)
  - 12 people did not answer
  
- **What feedback have you had from householders on the booking system?**
  - 4 people said the public found it difficult to use
  - 2 people said the public were unaware of the system
  - 7 people said the public did not agree with the system and felt it should be removed
  - 1 person said the public felt they should be permitted to book more than once per day
  - 2 people said the public felt we needed to improve the system
  - 1 person said the public felt that ALL small vans should be required to book in
  - 2 people said the public had been positive about the system
  - 6 people did not answer
  
- **Do you think the current booking system has helped us in identifying possible businesses/trade use at our recycling centres?**
  - 18 people said yes
  - 5 people said no
  - 2 people did not answer
  
- **What changes, if any, would you make to the booking system to help identify possible businesses/traders?**
  - 1 person said the booking system should be for traders only
  - 1 person said that there should be more engagement in the system by staff
  - 2 people said the public should have to declare the waste types they are bringing to use when booking
  - 2 people said that ALL small vans should have to book in
  - 1 person said that ALL small vans/trailers should have to go over the weighbridge
  - 18 people did not answer

- **Currently we only require trailers and large vehicles to book. Do you think it would be advantageous to require ALL trade vehicles to be booked in?**

- 18 people said yes
- 6 people said no
- 1 person did not answer

72% of staff would like to see ALL trade vehicles book through our booking system and not just those using a van or trailer.

- **Can you please explain the reasons for your answer to the above question?**

- 2 people said small vehicles can carry as much waste as a van
- 2 people said that it will assist us in identifying the origin of the customers waste
- 3 people said it will make it easier to identify traders
- 1 person said that smaller vehicles are identified through the self-declaration process
- 1 person said they did not see any benefit in asking all to book in
- 16 people did not answer

- **Would you like to make any other comments or suggestions about the booking system?**

- 1 person said that frontline decisions regards people not booking in should stand and not be overruled by management
- 1 person said that ALL staff should deal with non-booked vehicles in the same manner
- 1 person said we should remove the system for householder's
- 3 people said that we need to improve the booking system software
- 2 people said that everyone should have to book
- 1 person said that frontline staff require more improved management support

## APPENDIX 5 – SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITY – BOOKING SYSTEM BENCH MARKING

Council	Booking System	Types of vehicle required to book			
		Cars	People carriers	Small vans	Trailers
Aberdeen City	1	0	1	1	1
Aberdeenshire	1	0	1	1	1
Angus	1	0	0	1	1
Argyll and Bute	0	0	0	0	0
Clackmannanshire	1	0	0	1	1
Dumfries & Galloway	1	0	0	1	1
Dundee City	0	0	0	0	0
East Ayrshire	1	1	1	1	1
East Dunbartonshire	1	1	1	1	1
East Lothian	0	0	0	0	0
East Renfrewshire	1	1	1	1	1
Edinburgh City	1	1	1	1	1
Falkirk Council	1	0	0	1	1
Fife Council	1	0	0	1	1
Glasgow City Council	0	0	0	0	0
Highland Council	1	0	0	1	1
Inverclyde Council	0	0	0	0	0
Midlothian	1	0	0	1	1
Moray	1	1	1	1	1
North Ayrshire	0	0	0	0	0
North Lanarkshire	1	0	0	1	1
Orkney	0	0	0	0	0
Perth & Kinross	0	0	0	0	0
Renfrewshire	1	0	0	1	1
Scottish Borders	1	0	0	1	1
Shetland	0	0	0	0	0
South Ayrshire	1	1	1	1	1
South Lanarkshire	1	1	1	1	1
Stirling	1	1	1	1	1
West Dunbartonshire	1	0	0	1	1
West Lothian	1	0	0	1	1
Western Isles	1	0	0	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>

### Key

1 = Yes

0 = No

## APPENDIX 6 – OPTIONS SCORING

Options	Helps reduce waiting times & queues outside sites	Helps control trader abuse	Reduces the burden on site users prior to visit	Score
<b>Weighting</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>
1. Current Scheme	3	3	3	<b>30</b>
2. Current scheme plus small vans	3	4	2	<b>31</b>
3. All vehicles	3	4	1	<b>29</b>
4. Withdraw scheme	1	1	5	<b>18</b>

### Key

Much worse	1
Worse	2
No Change	3
Better	4
Much Better	5

### Weighting Rational

Keeping **waiting times and queues** outside the site is seen as the most important factor as it improves the experience for the majority of site users (not just those with a van or trailer). In addition it reduces the health and safety risk and impact on local businesses of queues outside sites.

Controlling **trader abuse** is not the core aim of the booking system however it is helpful.

A relatively small proportion of site users visit the sites in a large vehicle or trailer hence why this received a low weighting.

## APPENDIX 7 – Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)



Scottish Borders

Council

### Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

#### Part 1 Scoping

#### 1 Details of the Proposal

<b>Title of Proposal:</b>	<b>Community Recycling Centre Booking System</b>
<b>What is it?</b>	A new Policy/Strategy/Practice <input type="checkbox"/> A revised Policy/Strategy/Practice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Description of the proposal:</b> (Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the proposal being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes, including the context within which it will operate).)	The Council introduced a booking system for trailers and large vehicles as part of response to the COVID pandemic. The proposal is that the booking system remains in place but it is expanded to include small vans. The aim of the booking system is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Reduce waiting times and queues outside the sites which pose a risk to traffic and impact local businesses.</li> <li>(b) Reduce the amount of illegal use of sites by traders which places an additional financial burden on the Council.</li> <li>(c) Minimise the burden/inconvenience for site users prior to visiting the site.</li> </ul>
<b>Service Area:</b> <b>Department:</b>	Waste Services Infrastructure & Environment
<b>Lead Officer:</b> (Name and job title)	Ross Sharp-Dent – Waste & Passenger Transport Manager
<b>Other Officers/Partners involved:</b> (List names, job titles and organisations)	Clinton Sharkey Maggie Cripps

<b>Date(s) IIA completed:</b>	1 December 2022

## 2 Will there be any cumulative impacts as a result of the relationship between this proposal and other policies?

Yes
<p><b>If yes, - please state here:</b>          The waste services provided by the Council are integrated. For example changes to Community Recycling Centre accessibility may change a residents kerbside collection requirements or the waste types they present.</p>

## 3 Legislative Requirements

<b>3.1 Relevance to the Equality Duty:</b>	
<p><b>Do you believe your proposal has any relevance under the Equality Act 2010? Yes</b>  <i>(If you believe that your proposal may have some relevance – however small please indicate yes. If there is no effect, please enter “No” and go to Section 3.2.)</i></p>	
<b>Equality Duty</b>	<b>Reasoning:</b>
<p><b>Elimination of discrimination (both direct &amp; indirect), victimisation and harassment.</b>  <i>(Will the proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)</i></p>	<p>The booking system will require certain vehicle types to pre book before visiting a CRC. Those individual/households who rely on this type of vehicle as their main form of transport will need to take additional steps compared to those with a care for example.</p>
<p><b>Promotion of equality of opportunity?</b>  <i>(Will your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)</i></p>	As above
<p><b>Foster good relations?</b>  <i>(Will your proposal help or hinder the council s relationships with those who have equality characteristics?)</i></p>	As above

<p><b>3.2 Which groups of people do you think will be or potentially could be, impacted by the implementation of this proposal?</b>  <b>(You should consider employees, clients, customers / service users, and any other relevant groups)</b></p>		
<p>Please tick below as appropriate, outlining any potential impacts on the undernoted equality groups this proposal may have and how you know this.</p>		
	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Please explain the potential</b>

	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	impacts and how you know this
<b>Age</b> Older or younger people or a specific age grouping			x	Those in the older age group may find accessing and using the online booking system more challenging. They will still be able to make a booking via the 03001001800 number but this reduces their options and may be less convenient.
<b>Disability</b> e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring			x	Those with a physical disability may be more likely to use a vehicle that requires to pre-book i.e. an adapted large vehicle.  It is important to note that the Council already provides a number of exemptions to help minimise the impact for this group.
<b>Gender Reassignment/ Gender Identity</b> anybody whose gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth	x			
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> people who are married or in a civil partnership	x			
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to <b>maternity</b> leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, <b>protection</b> against <b>maternity</b> discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth),	x			
<b>Race Groups:</b> including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)	x			
<b>Religion or Belief:</b> different beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief)	x			
<b>Sex</b> women and men (girls and boys)	x			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> , e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual	x			

### 3.3 Fairer Scotland Duty

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

The duty is set at a strategic level - these are the key, high level decisions that SBC will take. This would normally include strategy documents, decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources and commissioning services.

#### Is the proposal strategic?

Yes

#### If No go to Section 4

If yes, please indicate any potential impact on the undernoted groups this proposal may have and how you know this:

	Impact			State here how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.	x			
<b>Material Deprivation</b> – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies	x			
<b>Area Deprivation</b> – where you live (e.g. rural areas), where you work (e.g. accessibility of transport)	x			
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> – social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income	x			
<b>Looked after and accommodated children and young people</b>	x			
<b>Carers</b> paid and unpaid including family members	x			
<b>Homelessness</b>	x			
<b>Addictions and substance</b>	x			



<b>use</b>				
<b>Those involved within the criminal justice system</b>	<b>x</b>			

#### 4 Full Integrated Impact Assessment Required

Select No if you have answered “No” to all of Sections 3.1 – 3.3.

**Yes**

If a full impact assessment is not required briefly explain why there are no effects and provide justification for the decision.

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<b>Signed by Lead Officer:</b>	
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Waste &amp; Passenger Transport Manager</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>1 December 2022</b>
<b>Counter Signature Director</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

## Part 2 Full Integrated Impact Assessment

### 5 Data and Information

#### **What evidence has been used to inform this proposal?**

(Information can include, for example, surveys, databases, focus groups, in-depth interviews, pilot projects, reviews of complaints made, user feedback, academic publications and consultants' reports).

Councillor, staff and householder feedback has been used to inform the response. For example concerns were raised regarding accessibility for those groups reliant on adapted vehicles. In response we have created exemptions to support this group.

During 2022 we have undertaken staff and site user surveys which requested feedback on the booking system.

We have analysed booking data to determine slot availability and usage throughout the week.

**Describe any gaps in the available evidence,-then record this within the improvement plan together with all of the actions you are taking in relation to this (e.g. new research, further analysis, and when this is planned)**

The surveys used to inform the response were not aimed at specific groups or characteristics. The surveys were looking to get general feedback on the performance of the current system.

## 6 Consultation and Involvement

**Which groups are involved in this process and describe their involvement**

Staff & public surveys.

**Describe any planned involvement saying when this will take place and who is responsible for managing the process**

Staff and public surveys were undertaken during 2022.

No further consultations are planned at this time.

**Describe the results of any involvement and how you have taken this into account.**

In total 217 people took part in the public survey of which 59 had used the booking system. CRC staff were consulted to get feedback on the system. We have reviewed 5 official complaints received regarding the booking system. The feedback has been used to inform how the system works. For example we have provided exemptions to adapted vehicles and blue badge holders, we have proposed increasing the number of booking slots and made changes to the online booking system.

**What have you learned from the evidence you have and the involvement undertaken? Does the initial assessment remain valid? What new (if any) impacts have become evident?**  
(Describe the conclusion(s) you have reached from the evidence, and state where the information can be found.)

The majority of feedback has been positive, although there is a proportion that feel the booking system is inconvenient and not necessary.

Analysis of UK vehicle data suggests that the majority of vehicles on UK roads are cars and are therefore unaffected by the proposal.

Widening out the booking system to cover small vans will help control miss use of the sites by traders.

Exemptions are required for those with a physical disability.

## 7 Mitigating Actions and Recommendations

**Consider whether:**

Could you modify the proposal to eliminate discrimination or reduce any identified negative impacts?  
(If necessary, consider other ways in which you could meet the aims and objectives of the proposal.)

Could you modify the proposal to increase equality and, if relevant, reduce poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage?

Describe any modifications which you can make without further delay (e.g. easy, few resource implications)

<b>Mitigation</b>			
Please summarise all mitigations for approval by the decision makers who will approve your proposal			
<b>Equality Characteristic/Socio economic factor</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Resource Implications (financial, people, health, property etc)</b>	<b>Approved Yes/No</b>
Age	Bookings can be made by phone as well as online.	None – Already able to make bookings via customer first.	NA – already in place
Disability	Provide exemptions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large vehicles modified to accommodate a passenger who travels in the vehicle with a wheelchair are not required to book if they are a blue badge holder.</li> <li>People carriers such as the Citroen Berlingo are not required to book when a small amount of waste is being deposited, however if the additional space is utilised to accommodate more waste it will be classified as a large vehicle and will require a booking slot.</li> </ul>	None – Exemptions already in place	NA – already in place

**8 Recommendation and Reasoning** *(select which applies)*

- Implement proposal with no amendments
- **Implement proposal taking account of mitigating actions (as outlined above)**
- Reject proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality, poverty, health and
- Socio -economic disadvantage

**Reason for recommendation:**

<b>Signed by Lead Officer:</b>	<b>Ross Sharp-Dent</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Waste &amp; Passenger Transport Manager</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>1 December 2022</b>
<b>Counter Signature Director</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	